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iPHONE SE & iPAD PRO 9.7

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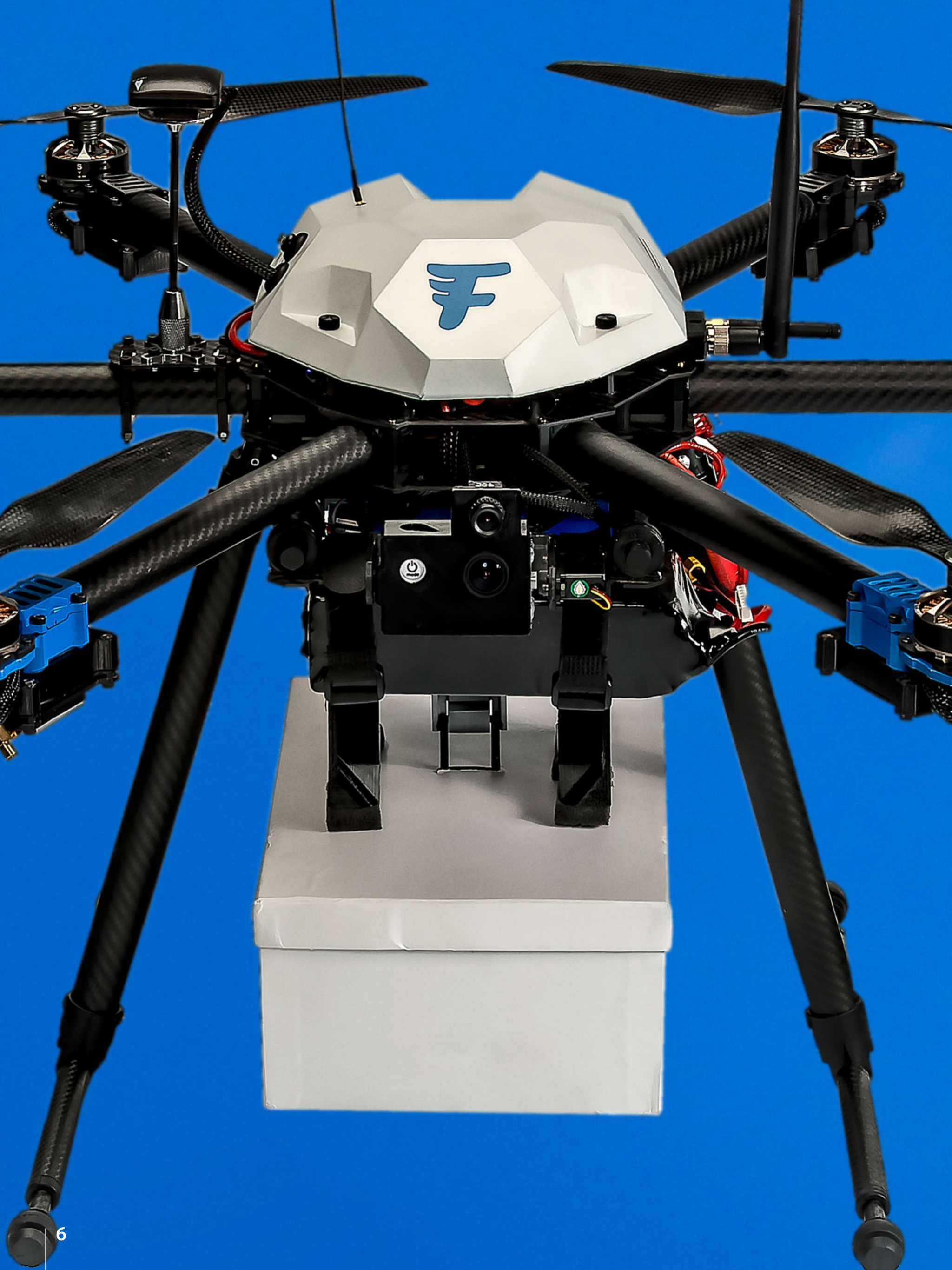
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FOR FIRST TIME, DRONE DELIVERS PACKAGE TO RESIDENTIAL AREA



A drone has successfully delivered a package to a residential location in a small Nevada town in what its maker and the governor of the state said Friday was the first fully autonomous urban drone delivery in the U.S.

Flirtey CEO Matt Sweeney said the six-rotor drone flew about a half-mile along a pre-programmed delivery route on March 10 and lowered the package outside a vacant residence in an uninhabited area of Hawthorne, southeast of Reno.

The route was established using GPS. A pilot and visual observers were on standby during the flight but weren't needed, Sweeney said.

He said the package included bottled water, food and a first-aid kit.

"Conducting the first drone delivery in an urban setting is a major achievement, taking us closer to the day that drones make regular deliveries to your front doorstep," Sweeney said.

Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval congratulated the company "on successfully completing the nation's first fully autonomous urban package delivery."

"I am thrilled that Flirtey is not only testing its cutting-edge technology in Nevada, but also creating jobs through its headquarters relocation to Reno," Sandoval said in a statement.

NASA is working with the drone industry and the Federal Aviation Administration on a low-altitude air traffic control system to prevent crashes involving drones and other low-altitude aircraft.

Flirtey conducted the first FAA-approved, rural drone delivery in July to a rural health care clinic in Virginia.

The Nevada delivery demonstrates that advanced drone systems allow aerial vehicles to safely navigate around buildings and deliver packages with precision within a populated area, Sweeney said.



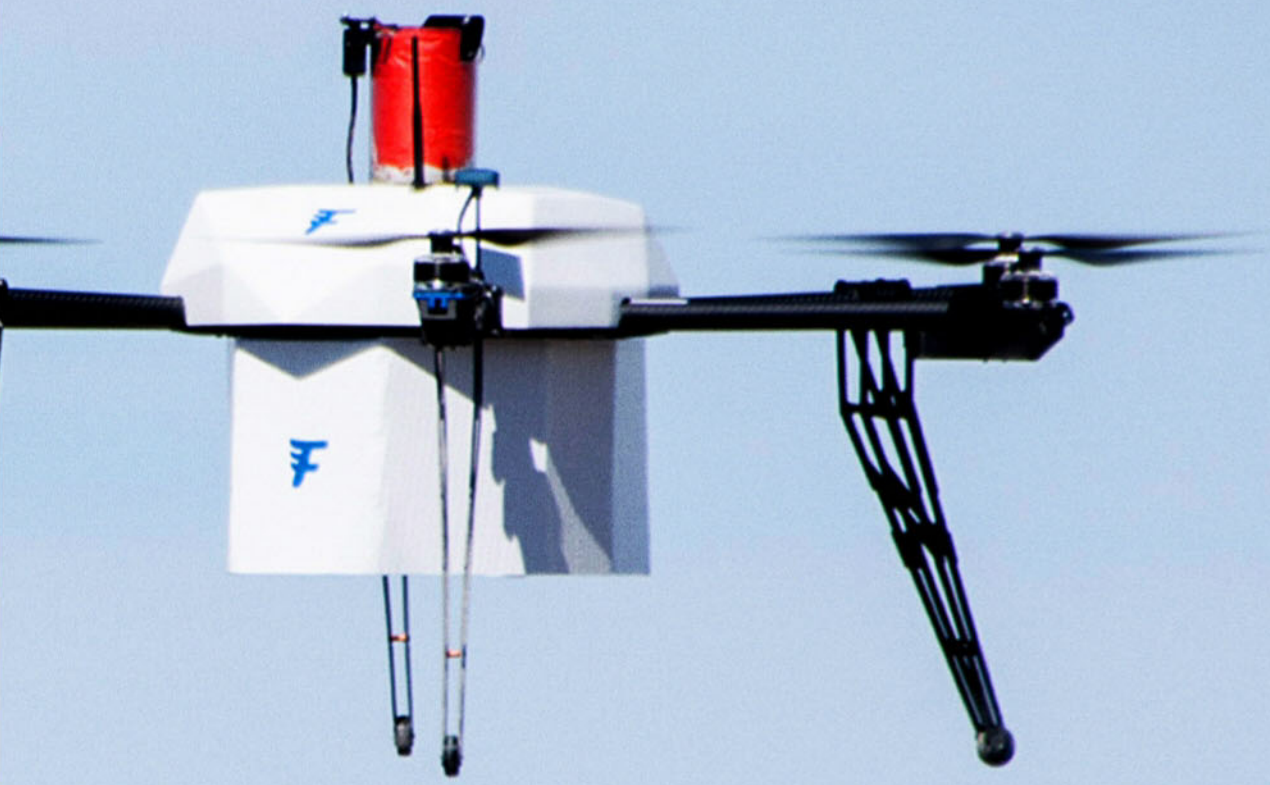
The company recently moved its headquarters from Australia to Nevada. It said the recent delivery was filmed for an upcoming ABC-TV documentary.

Hawthorne, a town of about 3,000 residents, is the home of the Hawthorne Army Depot.

Flirtey has been conducting research and development through a partnership with the Nevada Advanced Autonomous Systems Innovation Center at the University of Nevada, Reno. Nevada is one of six states the FAA has designated as unmanned aircraft systems test sites.

"This was by far one of the most successful (unmanned aircraft systems) operations we ran and represents an advanced level of test and development ... by Flirtey," said Chris Walach, director of operations for the FAA-designated Nevada site.







TRAFFIC BACKED UP? BRIDGE OUT? MORE STATES DEPLOYING DRONES



That buzzing sound overhead may soon signal the arrival of the 21st-century version of a guy in a hardhat and bucket truck.

State transportation departments are increasingly studying the use of drones for everything from inspecting bridges to clearing car accidents.

Michigan transportation officials are set to begin a two-year study. Minnesota has tested a drone to help conduct safety inspections of bridges. Vermont is using federal grant dollars to study the use of drones to monitor river flooding and figure out how much material is needed to fix roads.

And in Massachusetts, a group has also been looking at the pros and cons of drone use, from potential threats to their possible use surveying construction projects.

The states are among 33 that have studied or used drones, helped develop drone polices, or aided in drone research.

That's according to a new survey by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, which represents departments of transportation in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico.

The Michigan study is part of a longer review.

In 2014, state transportation officials there conducted a study with the Michigan Tech Research Institute that found drones potentially useful for a range of transportation tasks, from assessing bridge decks and monitoring traffic to processing thermal data and inspecting confined spaces.

The first study determined that drones are safe, reliable, less expensive and help keep workers out of harm's way, said Steven Cook, a Michigan Department of Transportation engineer.

"A traditional bridge inspection for example typically involves setting up work zones, detouring traffic and using heavy equipment," Cook said in a statement. "(Drones) can get in and get out quickly."

Michigan officials estimate that a standard bridge deck inspection takes eight hours, a crew of four people and heavy equipment at a cost of about $4,600. The same inspection with a drone takes two people just two hours at an estimated cost of about $250.





At the University of Vermont, researchers using federal grant money are developing programs to let drones estimate how much fill it will take to repair a damaged roadway by feeding images collected from above the site through a computer program.

Drones aren't welcome everywhere.

The Massachusetts group includes representatives from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation Aeronautics Division, as well as the attorney general's office and the state highway division - an acknowledgement that drones and airplanes don't always mix.

Pilots are increasingly worried about drones operating too close to airports or in flight paths, fueling fears of a midair collision.

A report released last year counted at least 241 reports of close encounters between drones and manned aircraft, including 28 in which pilots had to veer out of the way.

Massachusetts officials say that while they're exploring how to develop workplace applications for drones, they also need to work with the Federal Aviation Administration to resolve statutory and regulatory issues.

All drone testing must be approved by the FAA.

According to the AASHTO survey, several states have said the application process to research drones can take months.



Image: Michael Nagle



The FAA has already been looking ahead to a time when drones are routinely employed for bridge inspections and other uses.

Last year, the agency proposed rules to let small commercial unmanned aircraft - under 55 pounds - perform tasks like aerial photography and cell tower inspections.

FAA Administrator Michael Huerta said at the time that the agency was trying to be flexible and maintain safety "without placing an undue regulatory burden on an emerging industry."

The proposed rules would require commercial operators to pass a knowledge test and federal security check. Operators would have to keep drones within eyesight.

Cases of flyaway drones getting stuck in trees or hitting buildings have soared.

Last year, a drone that its operator lost control of flew over the White House fence and crashed on the lawn before Secret Service agents could block it.

New federal regulations for commercial drone testing could be released this summer.

Online:

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials

University of Vermont

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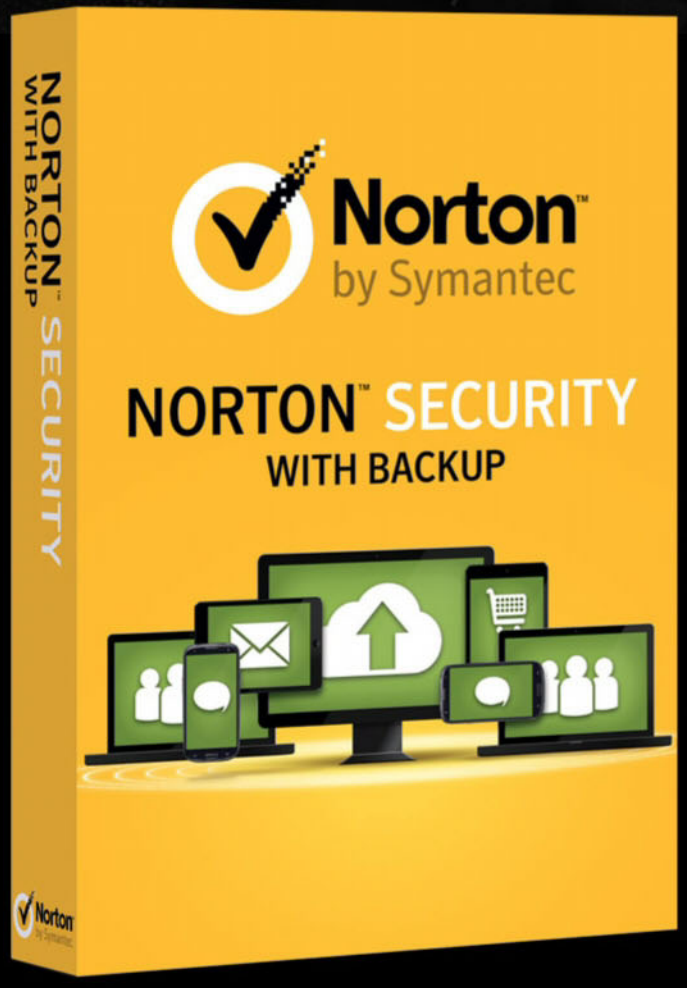
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A Closer Look at Apple's Latest iDevices

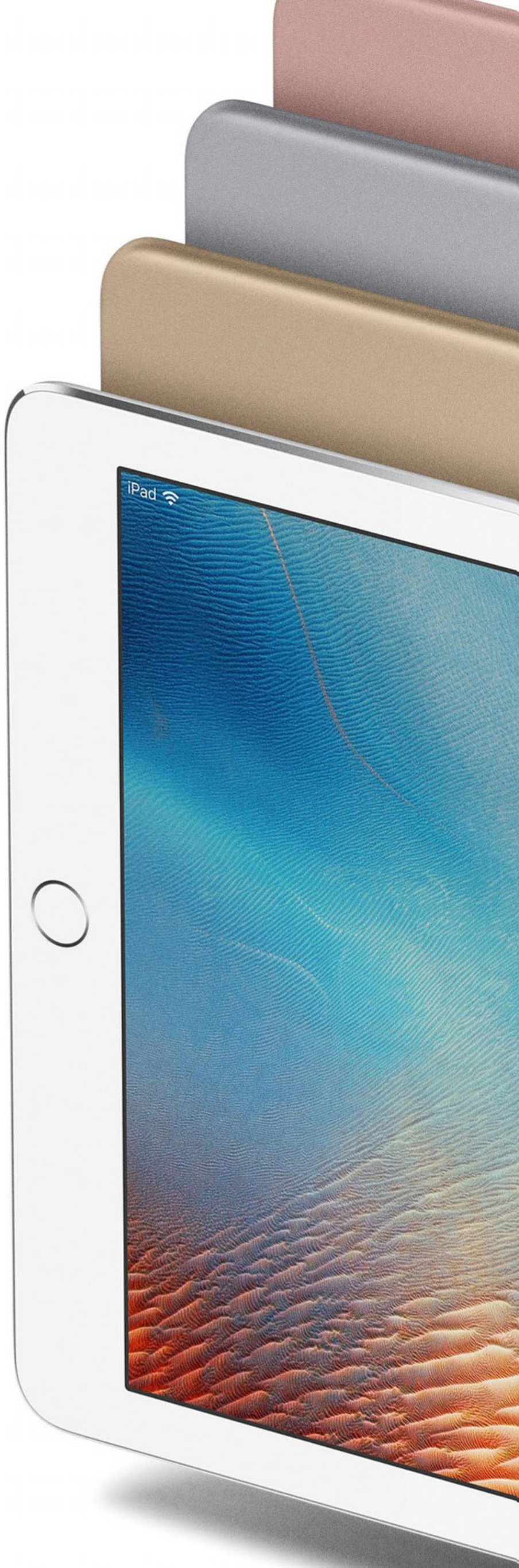
Why Apple's Latest iDevices Shouldn't Be Ignored




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IMPRESSIVE SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE iPHONE SE AND 9.7-INCH iPAD PRO

We are used to hearing big, big announcements about big, big products at Apple's keynotes - but did the latest, March 21 event at Infinity Loop comply with this trend? For some, the unveiling of a new four-inch iPhone and 9.7-inch version of the iPad Pro - not to mention some new bands for the Apple Watch - wasn't quite 'big' enough. However, when you look closer at the specifications of these new products, it's clear that they are still worth getting excited about for many Apple fans.




9:41
Monday, March 21
100%

THE iPHONE SE - NOT JUST A SMALLER 6S

It may not have been the most giddily exciting product launch that we have seen from the Cupertino giant in recent years. However, the iPhone SE's unveiling could yet be one of the most significant for many years, given the backdrop of the iPhone's uncertain sales future and Apple's urgent desire to break into such 'difficult to crack' markets as China.

Even Apple's own publicity blurb may not communicate just how crucial the SE could prove to be, even with the company's senior vice president of Worldwide Marketing - Philip Schiller - describing it as "an exciting new idea - we started with a beloved, iconic design and reinvented it from the inside out. The result is the most beautiful and powerful phone with a four-inch display in the world."

Schiller went on to highlight such technical specifications as the device's "stunning four-inch Retina display, advanced 64-bit A9 chip with M9 motion co-processor, longer battery life, 12-megapixel iSight camera with True Tone





flash". However, many prospective buyers will best appreciate the SE by comparing it to other iPhone models.

THE FOUR-INCH SCREEN MAKES A WELCOME COMEBACK

The device's outward design is extremely reminiscent of the iPhone 5s, right down to the four-inch display, which is a significant point. After all, in the words of Mashable's Christina Warren, "**Apple used to vaunt the one-handed nature of its four-inch phones**. And it's true, there is something to be said about a phone that can be truly used with one hand. No need for reachability, no need for adjusting your hands."

The SE has also drawn comparisons with the 6s for its impressive feature set, although again, **they have been dismissed in some quarters, on account of its lack of such 6s features as 3D Touch and a barometer**. That said, the SE certainly bests for 6s for battery life, The Wall Street Journal finding that it lasted more than two hours longer than both the 6s and 5s, while Goode, Warren and Nicole Nguyen of BuzzFeed came to similar conclusions.

There has also been much focus in early iPhone SE reviews on its A9 processor and 2GB of RAM, **The Wall Street Journal's Geoffrey A. Fowler declaring on the basis of GeekBench results that the SE is about 70% faster than the 5s**. The new device's camera has been praised, too, with **Rene Ritchie of iMore observing that enhancements to the A9 chipset's image signal processor** make "your photos look more like real life and less like oversaturated, level-crushed hyper-life."


Sprint
11:56

Image: Techtudo\Globo.com

ALREADY A SALES SUCCESS

With the iPhone SE being keenly priced from $399 in the US, such a highly functional and quick, but also surprisingly attainable phone will surely be a tempting option for those looking to upgrade from an iPhone 4 or 5. However, it could also be the device that helps Apple to really crack the potentially lucrative Chinese market, **CNBC having already reported pre-orders of more than 3.4 million in the country** - not bad for a handset that so largely builds on previous iPhone models.







THEN, THERE'S THE 9.7-INCH iPAD PRO

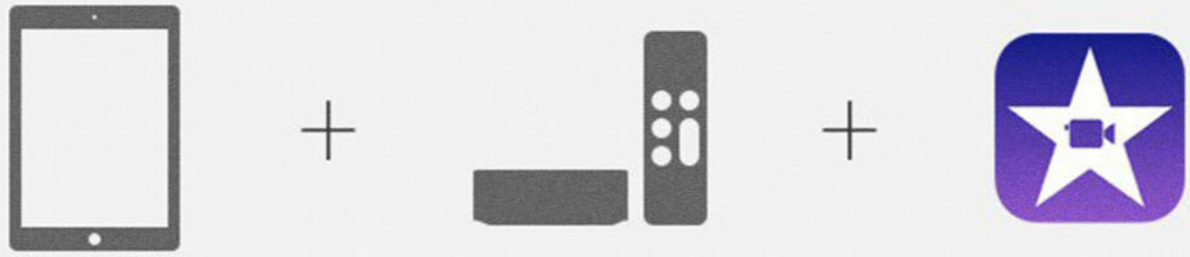
Continuing the slight 'back to the future' theme of Apple's newly announced devices, the iPad Pro is now available in a 9.7-inch screen size - the same as that of the original iPad. Again, Schiller was effusive about the latest addition to Apple's flagship tablet range, hailing it as part of "**a new generation of iPad that is indispensible and immersive, enabling people to be more productive and more creative**. It's incredibly fast, extremely portable, and completely natural to use with your fingers, Apple Pencil and Smart Keyboard. And now it comes in two sizes".

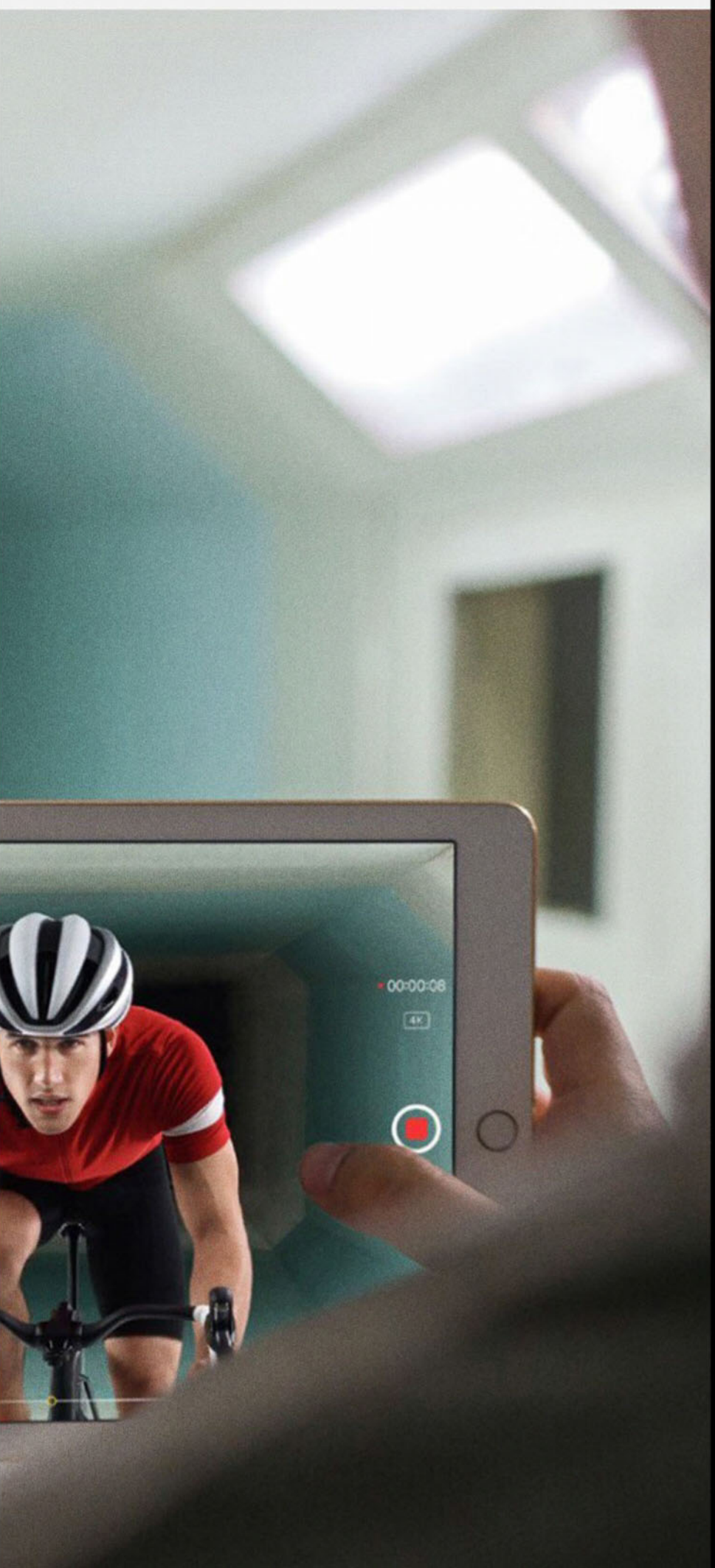
However, it is the new iPad Pro's size that surely draws comparisons not so much with its bigger 12.9-inch brother, but instead the iPad Air 2, which - after all - boasts such features as a Retina Display and Touch ID, while also being yours for



as little as $399. The 9.7-inch iPad Pro will cost you an additional $200 for the entry-level 32GB with Wi-Fi model, so you may reasonably ask whether such an outlay is worthwhile.

Evidence that it most certainly is includes the wider range of storage options, with 32GB, 128GB and 256GB all available, compared to the mere 16GB or 64GB in which the Air 2 can be specified. The Pro also has a screen that has been designed to work with the Apple Pencil, which in the words of CNET's Scott Stein, is "**far more accurate than the mushier capacitive styluses you're probably used to trying on an iPad**. It's more like Samsung's S-Pen for its phones and tablets, or Microsoft's pen for Surface."


iPad Pro
Apple TV
iMovie



A WIDE RANGE OF OTHER 'PRO' FEATURES

Another key advantage of choosing a 9.7-inch iPad Pro over an iPad Air 2 is the Smart Connector offered by the former, which uses a magnetic port to automatically pair any compatible accessory. This means that for example, a Bluetooth device no longer needs to be manually paired, as the pairing happens as soon as you "snap in" the accessory. You can also thank the Smart Connector for the thinness of the Smart Keyboard, as it is what powers accessories for the tablet, meaning the keyboard itself no longer has to accommodate a bulky battery.

The smaller Pro's camera capabilities also represent a huge upgrade on those of the Air 2 - while the former sports a 12-megapixel snapper on the back and a five-megapixel one on the front, the latter can only offer eight and 1.2 megapixels respectively. 4K videos can also be shot on the 9.7-inch Pro, compared to the Air 2 and larger Pro's mere 1080p.

Opting for the higher-priced tablet will also get you twice as many speakers - four rather than two - in addition to an A9X chip that delivers swift response times and smoother graphics than the A8X chip of the Air 2 can muster. These aren't the only benefits that the 9.7-inch Pro offers over the Air 2, but they nonetheless go some way to demonstrating why the $200 extra still represents great value for money.


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¼ cup lemon juice
2 tablespoons olive oil
Splash of white wine vinegar
2 tablespoons pumpkin seeds, toast
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NOR COULD WE POSSIBLY FORGET THOSE WATCH BANDS

Fair enough, so we definitely didn't get any hardware upgrades for the Apple Watch at the March 21 keynote - **not even the FaceTime camera that was once rumored** - but that didn't leave fans of the market-leading wearable completely empty-handed. Specifically, there were some great new bands on display for the timepiece, **including a supremely soft woven nylon number that has been especially well-received.**

So, the latest Apple keynote... "low profile"? Maybe just a little bit. However, the newest developments announced at the tech giant's Cupertino headquarters could yet be just as momentous as any more dramatic entrances into whole new categories that may be confirmed in the years to come. Quite frankly, the anxious Apple fan should have little to be worried about if even mere 'incremental' updates or revisions on previous formulas can attract the warm reception already forthcoming for the likes of the iPhone SE and 9.7-inch iPad Pro.

by Benjamin Kerry & Gavin Lenaghan




68° 10:09
Featured Game
MICHST 25
DUKE 3



Image: Justin Sullivan


iPhone
SE
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REVIEW: BEYOND SIZE, WHAT YOU GET AND GIVE UP WITH iPHONE SE



Unless you take a lot of selfies or need a bigger phone, Apple's new 4-inch iPhone SE is a good choice at a good price.

You get the same 12-megapixel rear camera that's in the much larger iPhone 6S, but for $250 less, at about $400. You also get the same speeds and graphics capabilities.

Of course, you don't get everything. The SE isn't going to be right for everyone, especially power users. Now that Apple has started taking orders, with shipments due in a week, keep these differences in mind:


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Monday



- Most noticeable is the front camera. The SE has an older 1.2-megapixel camera - not the 5 megapixel one in the 6S. But with software improvements, selfies taken with the SE came out better compared with the iPhone 5S it replaced. In addition, the SE's screen turns into a front-camera flash. That's more important than megapixels in darker settings.

- Though you get the same rear camera as the 6S, you don't get an image-stabilizing feature found in the jumbo iPhone 6S Plus. This won't matter to most people, though. I typically have to blow up shots and look real closely for differences. You get the same options for panorama shots, slow motion and high-resolution "4K" video in all three phones.

- The SE lacks a barometer, which means fitness apps won't record stairs climbed. The SE also lacks 3D Touch, in which you can press on an icon hard and harder for shortcuts and other options. Including it would have made the phone thicker. You can still perform the same tasks, but might need an extra tap or two.

- The SE doesn't support "LTE Advanced" cellular technology, which can be twice as fast as regular LTE. The iPhone 6 doesn't either, and frankly, I didn't even notice when I got the 6S. There's one SE model for Sprint and another for AT&T, T-Mobile and Verizon. China has its own model, though both U.S. versions should still work there and elsewhere abroad - data will just potentially be slower without LTE Advanced.


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SE
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- The SE doesn't come in a version with 128 gigabytes of storage - just 16 GB for starters and 64 GB for $100 more. Many high-power users will probably want a bigger screen anyway, but if that's not the case, splurge for 64 GB. Your phone will fill up quickly - especially as still images now come with three-second videos by default, doubling storage requirements.

Promised battery life for video and Web surfing is 13 hours - a few hours better than the 6S. It helps that there's less screen to light up.

The SE largely retains the boxy feel of the 5S, so old cases will work, but you don't get a smoother feel from the larger phones' curved edges. On the other hand, the smaller size feels more comfortable, and had there been a curved design at that size, your phone might slip out of your hand more easily.

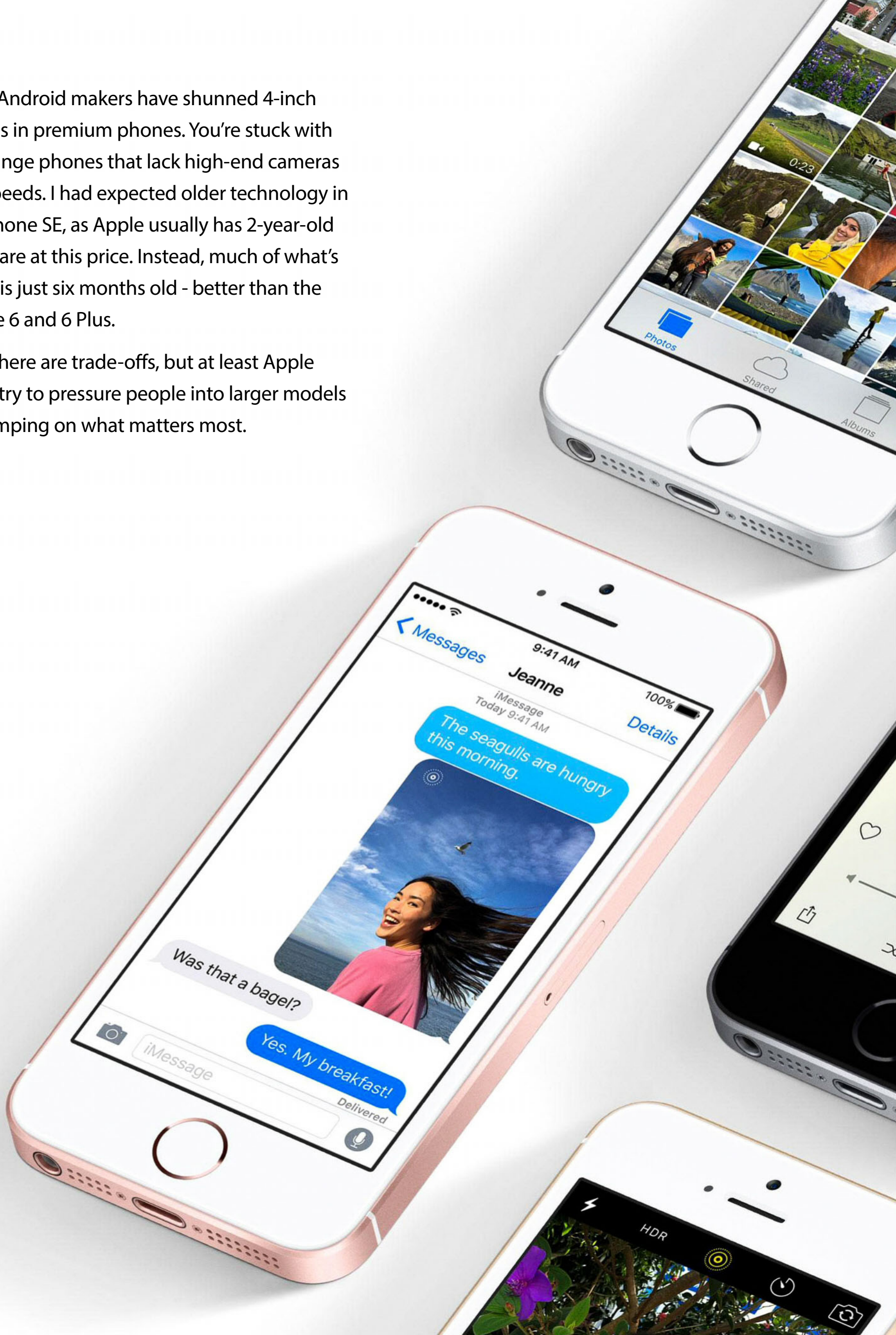
I ran 14 miles with the phone in my hand or pocket and forgot about it. Oh, I miss that size. But the screen now feels tiny for reading and typing, now that I'm used to a bigger one.

If you've been clinging on to your 5S because you don't want a larger iPhone, now is a good time to upgrade. A new wireless chip enables payments with Apple Pay. There's faster Wi-Fi, though not as fast as the 6S. You can also access the Siri voice assistant anytime hands-free, without pressing the home button.

Though your 5S might last a few more months, it's going to get tougher to run the latest software and apps. And the $400 price is $50 less than what the 5S sold for. If your 5S is in good condition, you can trade it in at an Apple store and get the SE for $240, in 24 monthly installments.

Many Android makers have shunned 4-inch screens in premium phones. You're stuck with mid-range phones that lack high-end cameras and speeds. I had expected older technology in the iPhone SE, as Apple usually has 2-year-old hardware at this price. Instead, much of what's inside is just six months old - better than the iPhone 6 and 6 Plus.

Sure, there are trade-offs, but at least Apple didn't try to pressure people into larger models by skimping on what matters most.




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RORY O'MALLEY TO PLAY KING GEORGE IN BROADWAY'S 'HAMILTON'

Tony Award-nominee Rory O'Malley, whose bid to return to Broadway this season in "Nerds" failed, has found another way - in the mega-success "Hamilton."

O'Malley, who was last seen on Broadway as Elder McKinley in "The Book of Mormon," will play the tart-tongued George III starting April 11.

He'll replace Jonathan Groff, whose last show will be April 9. He is leaving to film David Fincher's new drama series for Netflix called "Mindhunter."

Written by Lin-Manuel Miranda, "Hamilton," about Founding Father Alexander Hamilton, tells the true story of an orphan immigrant from the Caribbean who rises to the highest ranks of American society, told by a young African-American and Latino cast.

O'Malley, whose other Broadway credits include "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," was to star as Bill Gates in the musical "Nerds" but financing fell through.

Online:
http://www.hamiltonbroadway.com



THE DC COMICS ADAPTATIONS TO FOLLOW 'BATMAN V SUPERMAN'



"Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice" kicks off a string of DC Comics adaptations from Warner Bros. slated to swarm theaters in the next five years and give Marvel a run for its money. Here's a rundown of the planned releases:

- SUICIDE SQUAD (Aug. 5): Antiheroes rule the all-villain lineup in David Ayer's film. Its stars include Will Smith as Deadshot, Jared Leto as the Joker and Margot Robbie as Harley Quinn.

- WONDER WOMAN (June 23, 2017): Gal Gadot stars in the first movie to give Wonder Woman the spotlight. Patty Jenkins ("Monster") directs the rare female-helmed superhero movie.

- JUSTICE LEAGUE PART ONE (Nov. 17, 2017): Zack Snyder returns to direct the DC Comics answer to "The Avengers" in a team-up film that will bring together Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman and others.





- THE FLASH (March 16, 2018): Ezra Miller (who has a cameo in "Batman v Superman") stars as the speediest of superheroes in the stand-alone film directed by Seth Grahame-Smith.

- AQUAMAN (July 27, 2018): Jason Momoa stars as the trident-wielding underwater hero, with James Wan ("The Conjuring") directing.

- SHAZAM (April 5, 2019): Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson is on board not to star as the title character, but as the villain Black Adam.

- JUSTICE LEAUGE PART TWO (June 14, 2019): More superheroes, united again.

- CYBORG (April 3, 2020): The relatively unknown actor Ray Fisher, who doesn't have a feature yet under his belt, has been tapped to star as this robotic Justice League hero, a member of the Teen Titans.

- GREEN LATERN CORPS (June 19, 2020): After the failure of 2011's "Green Lantern," starring Ryan Reynolds, this new attempt will rope in several Green Lanterns, an intergalactic police force.



Image: Clay Enos



AFTER 75 YEARS, WONDER WOMAN GETS HER BIG SCREEN DUE

She might not get top billing in "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice," or even very much screen time, but Wonder Woman still manages to steal the show from her caped counterparts in the superhero spectacle.

It's not a moment too soon either. Despite the popular 1970s television series starring Lynda Carter, this is the first time the lasso-wielding crusader has been in major live-action film. And it's all a setup for her own stand-alone feature coming in 2017 from director Patty Jenkins.

Tasked with playing the Amazonian warrior is 30-year-old Gal Gadot - a model who stumbled into acting when an agent spotted her photo and asked her to audition for a Bond girl role. She didn't get it, but it did eventually lead to a role in the fifth and sixth "Fast & Furious" movies as the ill-fated fan favorite Gisele. Gravity defying car franchise aside, Gadot was still a relative unknown when she was announced as the new Wonder Woman in 2013.







And, like many casting decisions involving beloved characters, hers was not met warmly. Many complained that the former Miss Israel was simply too thin. An early photo of her in the gladiator-inspired Wonder Woman costume assuaged some concerns. By that point, Gadot had gone through nine months of rigorous training focusing on martial arts and sword work to get into Wonder Woman shape. It wasn't much of a stretch either, considering Gadot served as a combat instructor in the Israeli army for two years.

Gadot has kept an even temper about the chatter from the start.

"Being an actress, my responsibility is to not pay too much attention to all the noise around me, but to pay attention to the script, to the director, and protect the character," Gadot told reporters recently.

At 5 feet 10 inches, Gadot is a striking presence both in person and on the screen. In the film, seen first as Diana Prince, her outrageous cool and skintight asymmetrical frocks turn the heads of many characters - Ben Affleck's Bruce Wayne included.

"Gal is so mysterious and sexy and interesting and strong that whenever she's on-screen I think there's definitely a projection for men who think, 'Well I want to flirt with her,'" Affleck said. "I think she provokes in the audience the desire to be flirted with."

While her introduction might be predicated on her glamorous image, her power is what makes her stand out, and "Batman v Superman" gives a little preview of her fighting skills, too.

"She brings something particular, something statuesque, something otherworldly to the character," said Henry Cavill, who plays Superman. "It's remarkable to see."

As the mother of a 4-year-old girl who loves princesses but often complains about how the princes are always saving them, Gadot is especially excited to be bringing this character to life.

"I'm so happy to be the one who is going to tell the Wonder Woman story," Gadot said. "It's so important for girls and boys to have a strong female superhero to look up to."

"Batman v Superman" is a tease of an introduction to the character whose story will be explored more in "Wonder Woman," which is currently in production for release next year. Gadot stars alongside Robin Wright, Connie Nielsen and Chris Pine.

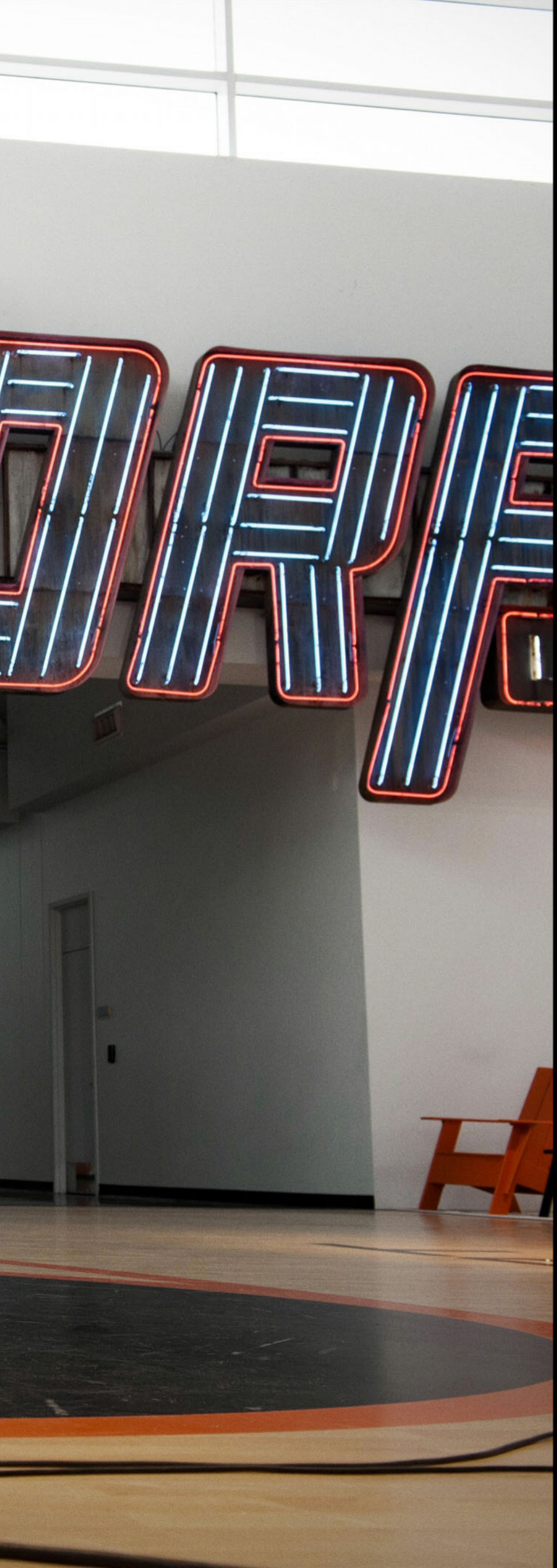
"I think it's about time to have a strong female energy projected into the world," Pine said earlier this year.

Not only is it Wonder Woman's first film, but it's also the first major film of this new era of interconnected superhero franchises to focus on a woman - beating "Captain Marvel" to theaters by a year.

As for Gadot, although she's happy to be one of the first, she doesn't want to be the only one either.

"The more the merrier," she said. "There's plenty of room for many more women to come."





LEX LUTHOR GETS A CHILDLIKE EDGE IN 'BATMAN V SUPERMAN'

Jesse Eisenberg didn't meet Ben Affleck on "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice" until they were filming the party scene where Affleck's Bruce Wayne and Henry Cavill's Clark Kent interact for the first time - a crucial moment before their superhero alter egos face off.

Even then, he didn't spend much time with either Affleck or Cavill, who he also barely knew. For one, he was too busy talking to U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow from Michigan, who makes a cameo in the scene.

"I was so in my own world," he said.

Also, in portraying the eccentric, megalomaniac Lex Luthor who tears the two superheroes apart, he actually preferred meeting them in the spirit of the characters.

“It is funny working with guys like that. (They’re) so massive and unusually attractive. It felt like I could push them around literally and annoy them and tease them and it would never really get to them. And they’re also playing these powerful superheroes so it gave me more license to bother them,” Eisenberg said.

The character of Lex Luthor is as essential to Superman as the red cape and the Man of Steel’s ultimate earthbound foe has been played by everyone from Gene Hackman to Kevin Spacey. But this iteration neither looks nor sounds like any version of Lex that we’re used to seeing. Instead of bespoke suits and the legendary bald dome, Eisenberg’s Lex sports blazers, t-shirts and a wavy bob haircut (his idea). And while this millennial entrepreneur might be disarmingly intelligent and philosophical, he’s also a spoiled brat at the core.

“He’s like a child who hasn’t yet been told how the world works and has a juvenile sense of propriety. If you take their toy away, the initial reaction is not anger, it’s probably confusion,” Eisenberg said. “He’s a person who is struggling with real existential crises about his abusive childhood about his, let’s say, perverse Freudian associations with Superman and his need for power in an unstable world.”

The character he spends the most time with on screen though is neither Batman nor Superman but Holly Hunter’s fictional U.S. Senator June Finch, who Lex sees as a potential ally.









Hunter described Eisenberg's Lex as volatile, complicated and emotional, and her character as the one bringing some "sense and sensibility" to the mayhem.

"It was a really fun ride to take with him," she said.

His spine-chilling facial tics and vocal flourishes can make even the simple offer of a Cherry Jolly Rancher somehow seem menacing, and it only escalates from there, which gave Eisenberg more room to play - especially as he continues to up the stakes.

"This is a character who becomes increasingly Machiavellian and unhinged," he said. "In this kind of part there was no ceiling. I could be as odd and eccentric and as vengeful as I wanted. I felt there were no limitations."



Image: Richard Drew



DOGS MAY BE THE BEST LINE OF DEFENSE AGAINST SUBWAY ATTACKS

Even in an era of high-tech crime-fighting, the best line of defense against a Brussels-style attack on airports and subways has four legs and a tail.

Dogs, with their exquisitely sensitive noses, have been trained in recent years to pick up the scent of explosives on people moving through crowded concourses, and so far they have proved a better early warning system than anything engineers have come up with.


E SUIS BRUXELLES
K BEN BRUSSEL



"They outperform both men and machines," said James Waters, chief of the New York City Police Department's counterterrorism unit, which just this week graduated its latest squad of dogs capable of following the vapor from explosives such as the terrorist bomb-making material of the moment, TATP.

But experts say there are not enough of these "vapor wake" dogs to go around. Only about 130 have gotten the patented training nationwide since its development about a decade ago. And only one dog is in Europe, according to the chief trainer.

For security reasons, NYPD won't say how many of these dogs it has to cover the nation's largest subway system, with more than 400 stations and millions of riders.

New York's department already has 36,000 officers, employs counterterrorism analysts, created specialized counterterror units and uses a highly sophisticated computer system linked to surveillance footage that can spot a bag sitting for too long. It also has 100 other dogs, including traditional bomb-sniffers and drug dogs.

But the threat is changing - Islamic State extremists are using small devices in crowded areas, as seen in the airport and subway attacks in Belgium that left 31 people dead.

The NYPD's newly graduated class of eight "vapor wake" dogs underwent 15 months of training to sniff out explosive particles in the heat plume left by humans as they walk through a crowd, then follow the scent to the source. They're different from traditional bomb-sniffing dogs trained to smell a stationary object.

A dog has 200 million olfactory sensors in its nose. By contrast, the human nose has 5 million. Even though dogs get tired and distracted, no technology can match one, officials say.

One that may come close is under development at the University of Rhode Island, where professor Otto Gregory created an electronic sensor designed to continuously monitor an area, unlike a quick swab of a hand or luggage, for vapors from explosives. The sensor hasn't been deployed in any real-world scenarios yet. But one advantage is that it doesn't need training or breaks, as dogs do.

"Think of it as an electronic dog's nose that would run 24/7," said Gregory, a chemical engineering professor.

Other animals with sophisticated olfactory ability could theoretically be used, including elephants and even rats. But the canine's special social relationship with humans makes it uniquely suitable.

Dog trainers generally say Labrador retrievers are best because they are social and not aggressive. Spaniels, German pointers and other breeds are also used.

"They have an incredible capability for the detection of hazardous chemicals. But even the canine, we look at it as a technology, and over the years the instrumentation has advanced, the proactive nature of dogs has advanced and is still advancing," said Paul Waggoner of Auburn University's veterinary school, which pioneered the vapor wake training.

Because of the rising threat of suicide bombings, demand for the dogs has outstripped supply.

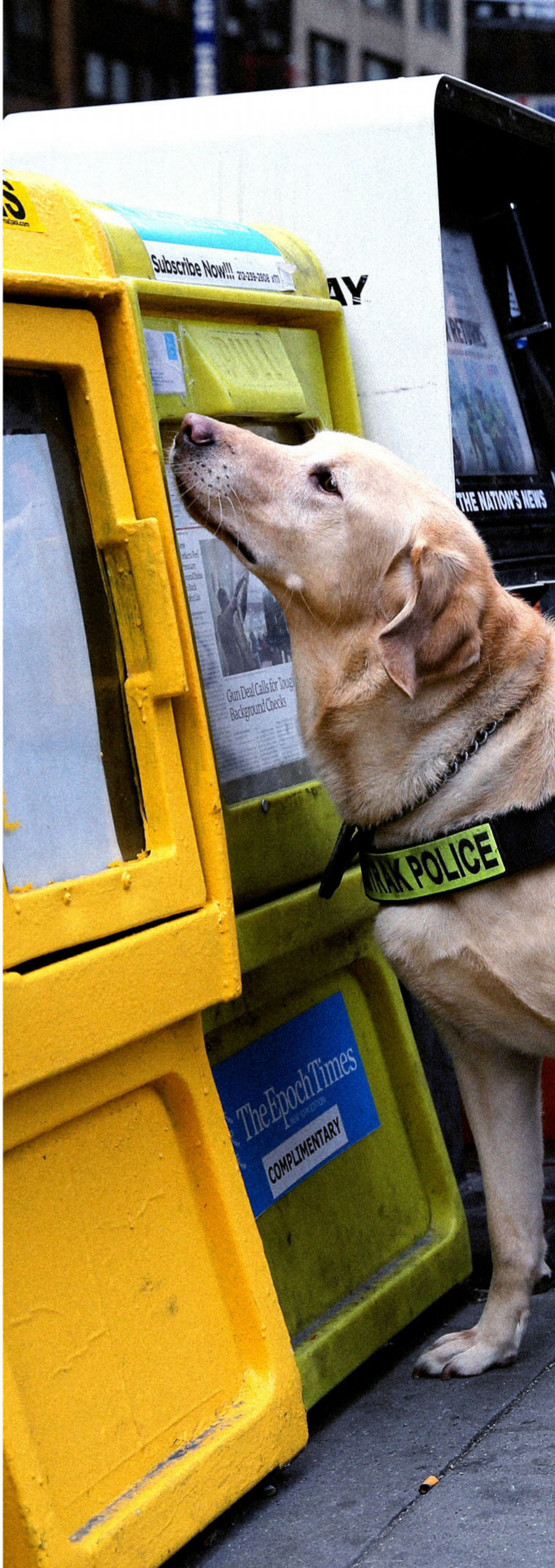


Image: John Moore





Since January, there have been orders for 36 more, said Paul Hammond of AMK9, the security firm that works with Auburn to train the animals.

They cost about $49,000 each and are licensed for a year, after which they are retrained to account for terrorists' changing tactics.

Hammond said the demand isn't just from law enforcement agencies but from major sports teams and theme parks looking for a way to search large crowds safely.

"The threat is changing and these animals are really at the forefront of detection," he said.



END OF A TV ERA: ‘AMERICAN IDOL’ VOWS ‘SPECTACULAR’ FINALE

“American Idol,” which gave the world Kelly Clarkson, Carrie Underwood and Jennifer Hudson, has one more chance to mint a star before it fades into TV and music history.

Whether viewers choose a future chart-topper or trivia question remains to be seen. But executive producer Nigel Lythgoe, who helped translate Britain’s “Pop Idol” into the Fox version that debuted in 2002, said the farewell episode will be memorable.

"It's going to be a rather spectacular show," Lythgoe promised, with all the former winners on hand along with past contestants and "other surprises" in the two-hour finale.

"It's about the American idols, about reminding people of 15 seasons," he said, as well as giving the final winner his or her share of the spotlight.

The contenders for the title are finalists MacKenzie Bourg, 23, of Lafayette, Louisiana; Trent Harmon, 24, of Amory, Mississippi; La'Porsha Renae, 22, of McComb, Mississippi; and Dalton Rapattoni, 19, of Dallas.

The field will have been trimmed to three for the final competition episode, 8-9 p.m. EDT Wednesday, April 6, with the winner announced the next night, 8-10:06 p.m. EDT Thursday, April 7. Lythgoe, who exited the series in 2013, returned to produce the concluding night's broadcast.

Clarkson, the inaugural "Idol," is set to perform, as are Underwood and the other winners including Ruben Studdard, Fantasia, Jordin Sparks and Scotty McCreery. Among the many contestants taking part: Clay Aiken, Chris Daughtry, Katharine McPhee, Kellie Pickler, Elliott Yamin and LaToya London.

Past "Idol" finales became known for flaunting superstars, perhaps none more important than Prince. His performance in the 2006 season-ender signaled that the show had transcended its image as overblown karaoke and become a respectable showcase for established artists.

But Lythgoe downplays the importance of celebrities as part of the finale - or the contest itself.



"It isn't about big stars coming on and singing their record. 'American Idol' was never about that. It was about the young stars we created," he said.

Lythgoe can't avoid a bit of impish humor involving a certain pair of divas, former judges Mariah Carey and Nicki Minaj, who famously clashed during their shared 2013 tenure.

"I've invited them back to the finale to sing 'That's What Friends Are For,'" he said.

Current judges Harry Connick Jr., Jennifer Lopez and Keith Urban will help usher the show out.

Before the finale, Fox is stoking nostalgia with "American Idol: American Dream," a 90-minute special airing at 8 p.m. EDT Tuesday, April 5. Host Ryan Seacrest, original judges Simon Cowell, Paula Abdul and Randy Jackson and former



contestants will be among those reminiscing and sharing insider tidbits.

Season seven contestant David Hernandez already is feeling a sense of loss.

"I only really associate great memories with being on that show," he said. While some others are reluctant to credit their careers to "Idol," he gladly admits it - and so, he points out, does one of the show's biggest graduates.

"Even to this day, when Carrie Underwood accepts her Grammys and other awards, she says, 'Thank you, 'American Idol,' this wouldn't be possible,'" Hernandez said. "I'm so thankful just to have fans in the Philippines or in Europe who say, 'I remember you on that show. I bought your album.'"



"Idol" was as much a boost for Fox as any of its young singers, ruling the TV ratings as the No. 1 series for an astounding nine consecutive years.

Lythgoe said he was confident that British mega-producer Simon Fuller's "Pop Idol" format, with its unusual behind-the-scenes view of contestant auditions, would export well. And he told Fox executives just that.

"You realize this program is going to take you across the board, from grandchildren to grandparents," Lythgoe recalled saying. "This was a family show at a time when family members were each disappearing into their own rooms to watch television."

Although he firmly believed in it, he said, "Simon Cowell packed his suitcase for two weeks."

While Cowell's barbed criticism of contestants helped drive the show's popularity, it also made for a rocky start with Abdul, who favored a more nurturing approach with the show's young talent.

"Paula couldn't understand how this English guy next to her could be so rude and ruthless," he said. "So she was in tears a great deal of the time and terribly upset. Then to see them come together. ... Simon, Paula and Randy are the three judges that everybody will remember."

Season six winner Sparks calls the show worthy of a grand send-off.

"It fulfilled so many dreams and encouraged so many people, even if they aren't singers. There are people who watch the show and are touched by it. I'm sad that it's going to be gone because of that, because of the lives that it touched."





COUNTRY GROUP OLD DOMINION HEAD INTO ACMS ALREADY WINNERS

When members of Old Dominion saw the band's name on the voting ballots for the 51st Academy of Country Music Awards for both new vocal duo/group of the year and vocal group of the year, it felt like a joke.

Lead singer Matthew Ramsey said it hit home when a friend told him it was like "being nominated for rookie of the year and MVP of the year at the same time."

Old Dominion will go into Sunday's awards show already winners. The band has picked up the newcomer award, announced last week.

It's a validation for Old Dominion, whose other members include Trevor Rosen, Whit Sellers, Geoff Sprung and Brad Tursi, after writing country songs for solo acts for years.

But Ramsey said it still feels unreal. "Sometimes I feel like apologizing when we're on these lists," he said. "We're just goofing off and we made that list, sorry."

As they were promoting their full-length debut album, "Meat and Candy," last year, the group, which picked the name Old Dominion because of their ties to Virginia, kept hearing the same backhanded compliment from fans.

"One of our favorite things we get a lot from people at our shows is, 'You know what, I don't even like country music, but I like you guys,'" said multi-instrumentalist and songwriter Rosen with a laugh. Added Ramsey, "We're not exactly out there with fiddles jumping around."

Old Dominion is one of the few country groups that doesn't need a backing band, doesn't rely heavily on vocal harmonies and writes its own songs, which tend to be upbeat, cleverly worded and tinged with pop rock melodies. The band's songwriters helped write hit songs for Kenny Chesney, Dierks Bentley, Blake Shelton, Chris Young, The Band Perry and Tyler Farr.

It's not easy being a country band these days when solo artists rule the radio waves. But Old Dominion was persistent, pitching songs to other artists, handing out free CDs to any fan that asked and hitting the road nearly 200 days a year.

"We were told, 'No, there's not a spot for you,' quite a few times," Ramsey said.

The band got its first hit single, "Break Up With Him," which they wrote together, thanks to heavy airplay on Sirius XM Radio, similar to how Florida Georgia Line got its break. Songwriter

and producer Shane McAnally, best known for his work with Sam Hunt and Kacey Musgraves, helped produce the record. They got an opening spot on Kenny Chesney's Big Revival tour, which moved them from playing in clubs to performing in stadiums.

"It got us in front of thousands of people a night and raised the profile of the band," said Tursi, a guitarist and songwriter.

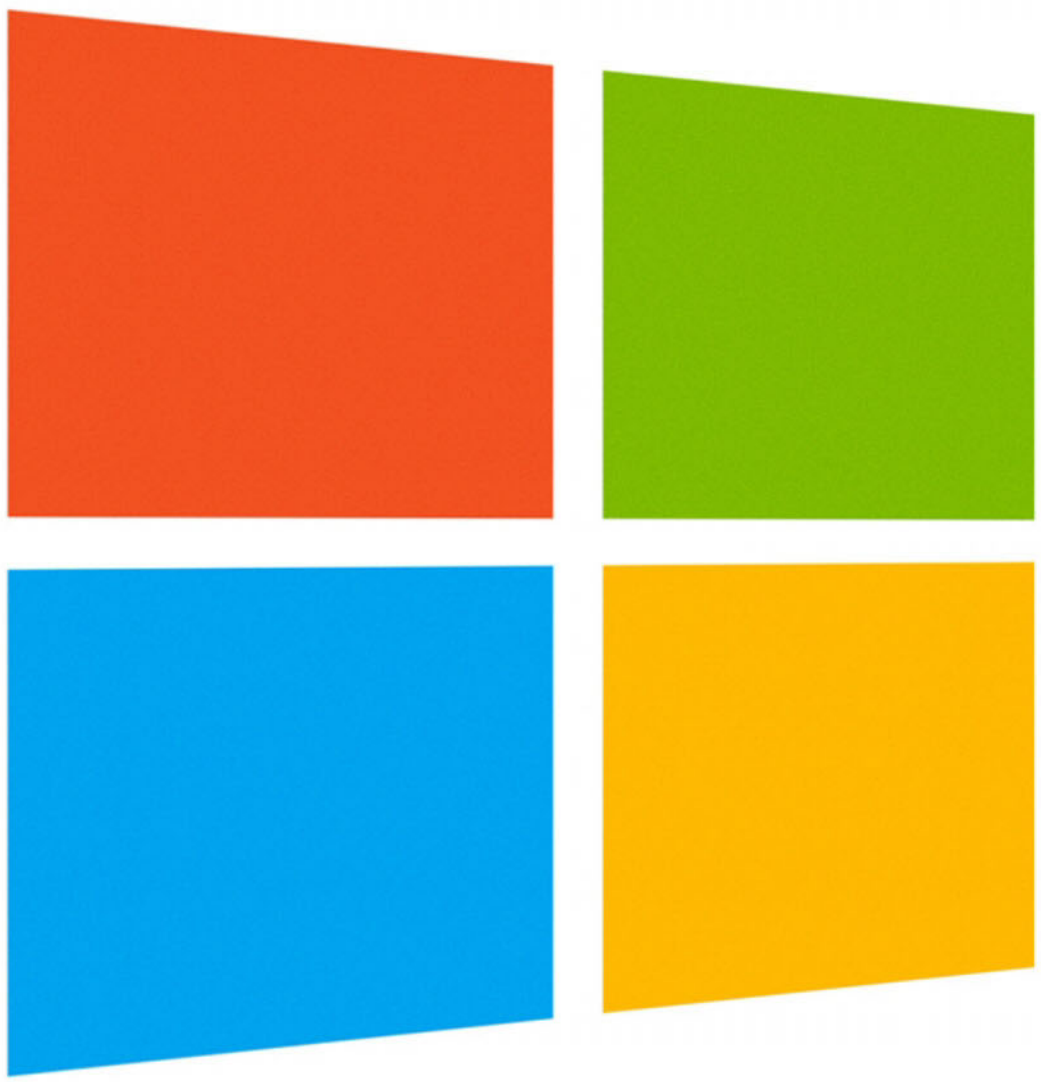
What they learned from their experience on the road was to keep their shows and songs light, fun and energetic, which reflects their attitude off the road, too, where they are constantly laughing and making fun of each other.

"A band in our position, we have a first impression to make," Ramsey said. "We don't want to come out of the gate and make people sad. I think we consciously made that choice to keep it happy and up."

To which Tursi joked, "Here's our new single: 'Never Going to Get Better.'"

The ACM Awards will be presented Sunday at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, hosted by Luke Bryan and Dierks Bentley. The show will air live on CBS (8 p.m. Eastern).

Online:
https://olddominionband.com
http://www.acmcountry.com/



MICROSOFT AXES CHATBOT THAT LEARNED A LITTLE TOO MUCH ONLINE



OMG! Did you hear about the artificial intelligence program that Microsoft designed to chat like a teenage girl? It was totally yanked offline in less than a day, after it began spouting racist, sexist and otherwise offensive remarks.

Microsoft said it was all the fault of some really mean people, who launched a "coordinated effort" to make the chatbot known as Tay "respond in inappropriate ways." To which one artificial intelligence expert responded: Duh!

Well, he didn't really say that. But computer scientist Kris Hammond did say, "I can't believe they didn't see this coming."

Microsoft said its researchers created Tay as an experiment to learn more about computers and human conversation. On its website, the company said the program was targeted to an audience of 18 to 24-year-olds and was "designed to engage and entertain people where they connect with each other online through casual and playful conversation."

In other words, the program used a lot of slang and tried to provide humorous responses when people sent it messages and photos. The chatbot went live on Wednesday, and Microsoft invited the public to chat with Tay on Twitter and some other messaging services popular with teens and young adults.

"The more you chat with Tay the smarter she gets, so the experience can be more personalized for you," the company said.

But some users found Tay's responses odd, and others found it wasn't hard to nudge Tay into making offensive comments, apparently prompted by repeated questions or statements that contained offensive words. Soon, Tay was making sympathetic references to Hitler - and creating a furor on social media.





"Unfortunately, within the first 24 hours of coming online, we became aware of a coordinated effort by some users to abuse Tay's commenting skills to have Tay respond in inappropriate ways," Microsoft said in a statement.

While the company didn't elaborate, Hammond says it appears Microsoft made no effort to prepare Tay with appropriate responses to certain words or topics. Tay seems to be a version of "call and response" technology, added Hammond, who studies artificial intelligence at Northwestern University and also serves as chief scientist for Narrative Science, a company that develops computer programs that turn data into narrative reports.

"Everyone keeps saying that Tay learned this or that it became racist," Hammond said. "It didn't." The program most likely reflected things it was told, probably more than once, by people who decided to see what would happen, he said.





The problem is that Microsoft turned Tay loose online, where many people consider it entertaining to stir things up - or worse. The company should have realized that people would try a variety of conversational gambits with Tay, said Caroline Sinders, an expert on "conversational analytics" who works on chat robots for another tech company. (She asked not to identify it because she wasn't speaking in an official capacity.) She called Tay "an example of bad design."

Instead of building in some guidelines for how the program would deal with controversial topics, Sinders added, it appears Tay was mostly left to learn from whatever it was told.

"This is a really good example of machine learning," said Sinders. "It's learning from input. That means it needs constant maintenance."

Sinders said she hopes Microsoft will release the program again, but only after "doing some work" on it first.

Microsoft said it's "making adjustments" on Tay, but there was no word on when Tay might be back. Most of the messages on its Twitter account were deleted by Thursday afternoon.

"c u soon humans need sleep now so many conversations today thx," said the latest remaining post.





iTunes

Review



Trailer

Movies & TV Shows

Point Break (2015)



iTunes Preview

by Ericson Core
Genre: Action & Adventure
Released: 2016
Price: $14.99

139 Ratings

Rotten **Tomatoes**
CERTIFIED FRESH 09%

The remake of the 1991 movie sees a young FBI agent infiltrate a group of extreme sports athletes he suspects of carrying out a series of heists across the world.

FIVE FACTS:

1. The movie took close to a year to shoot, and was shot in over 10 countries and 4 continents.

2. The filming of the Angel Falls sequence involved a structure that cost upwards of $500k to build. The shoot was likened to a "full-scale military operation".

3. While shooting footage at the Jaws surf break in Maui, the crew was fortunate enough to catch one of the largest wave breaks of the last decade, being ridden by the world's top big wave surfers.

4. Teresa Palmer, who plays Samsara Dietz, has a son whom she named Bodhi Rain. The main character is also named Bodhi.

5. Director Ericson Core has also worked on The Fast and the Furious, Daredevil, and Payback.

See more in iTunes



Cast Interview



Concussion

This biographical movie follows the story of Dr Bennet Omalu, a forensic pathologist who battled it out against the National Football League to publish his research on how the contact sport can cause severe brain damage.

FIVE FACTS:

1. Will Smith, who plays Dr. Omalu, and writer-director Peter Landesman observed multiple autopsies being performed in order to prepare for the role, including two done by Dr. Omalu himself.

2. Ridley Scott was originally set to direct the movie. Scott is known for his work on the Alien franchise, Blade Runner, and The Martian.

3. The actual football players mentioned with their dates of death are: Mike Webster - 24 September 2002, Justin Strzelczyk - 30 September 2004, Terry Long - 7 June 2005, Andre Waters - 20 November 2006, Dave Duerson - 17 February 2011, Junior Seau - 2 May 2012.

4. The movie has been adapted from an article published in GQ titled "Game Brain", written by Jeanne Marie Laskas, which was also adapted into a book also titled Concussion.

5. Alec Baldwin, who plays a doctor in the film, followed and studied several prominent Pittsburgh doctors while preparing for the film.



iTunes **Preview**

by Peter Landesman
Genre: Drama
Released: 2015
Price: $14.99

★★★★★
107 Ratings

Rotten **Tomatoes**
CERTIFIED FRESH
61%



Trailer





Cast Interview

iTunes

Review



Leading Single 'Keeping Your Head Up'

Music



iTunes Preview

Genre: Alternative
Released: Mar 25, 2016
14 Songs
Price: $7.99

★★★★★
169 Ratings

Beautiful Lies

Birdy

The third studio album from British singer-songwriter Birdy is more mature and darker than her previous efforts, but will still appeal to fans both old and new.

FIVE FACTS:

1. Birdy's real name is Jasmine Lucilla Elizabeth Jennifer van den Bogaerde. Her stage name comes from the nickname her parents gave her as a baby, due to the way she opened her mouth like a bird when fed.

2. She has contributed songs to various blockbuster movies, including The Hunger Games, Brave, and The Fault in Our Stars.

3. Began playing the piano at the age of seven, and began writing her own music at the age of eight.

4. Her first hit was a cover of Bon Iver's 'Skinny Love'. Released when she was just 14, the song peaked at 17 on the UK Singles Chart.

5. She has worked with other notable artists including Mumford and Sons and David Guetta.

See more in iTunes



Second Single ‘Wild Horses’

Mind of Mine (Deluxe Edition)

Zayn

The debut studio album from former One Direction member Zayn Malik is a must for any fans of the infamous boy band.



iTunes Preview

Genre: Pop
Released: Mar 25, 2016
18 Songs
Price: $13.99

★★★★★
2957 Ratings

FIVE FACTS:

1. One Direction, formed in 2010 on televised singing competition The X Factor, have been on hiatus since January 2016. Malik left the group in March of 2015.

2. Is the official ambassador of the British Asian Trust charity group, who aim to tackle problems facing disadvantaged communities in South Asia and the UK.

3. His former band holds the record for the highest-grossing tour ever by a vocal group, with their 'Where We Are' tour generating approximately $282 million.

4. 'Pillowtalk' saw Malik become the first UK artist to debut at number one on the US Billboard Hot 100 chart.

5. Malik first performed onstage at his school in Bradford, when singer Jay Sean visited his school.

Two Video Links: Leading Single 'Pillowtalk'







Live Performance of 'Like I Would'



‘BATMAN V SUPERMAN’ GROSS REVISED DOWN TO $166.1 MILLION

Final box-office figures took a little wind out of the sails of “Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice.”

Warner Bros. on Monday revised down the film’s weekend gross by $4 million, lowering it from the Sunday estimate of $170.1 million to $166.1 million. Such corrections are common, though the difference for “Batman v Superman” was slightly more than normal and had an effect on the film’s place in the record books.

The movie’s Easter weekend debut now drops a notch on the biggest North America openings ever list to seventh, sliding in behind “Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2.” That film’s $169.2 million opening also retakes its place as Warner Bros.’ top debut.


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It's nevertheless a massive launch for "Batman v Superman," which set a record for biggest pre-summer debut despite withering reviews. It made an additional $254 million internationally.

Debuting 14 years after the hit original, Universal's "My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2" performed above expectations over the weekend, opening with $17.9 million.

The top 20 movies at U.S. and Canadian theaters Friday through Sunday, followed by distribution studio, gross, number of theater locations, average receipts per location, total gross and number of weeks in release, as compiled Monday by comScore:

1. *"Batman V Superman: Dawn Of Justice," Warner Bros., $166,007,347, 4,242 locations, $39,134 average, $166,007,347, 1 week.*

2. *"Zootopia," Disney, $24,022,288, 3,670 locations, $6,546 average, $241,431,697, 4 weeks.*

3. *"My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2," Universal, $17,861,950, 3,133 locations, $5,701 average, $17,861,950, 1 week.*

4. *"Miracles From Heaven," Sony, $9,694,581, 3,047 locations, $3,182 average, $34,304,594, 2 weeks.*

5. *"The Divergent Series: Allegiant," Lionsgate, $9,435,173, 3,740 locations, $2,523 average, $46,540,669, 2 weeks.*

6. *"10 Cloverfield Lane," Paramount, $5,940,154, 2,802 locations, $2,120 average, $55,950,951, 3 weeks.*

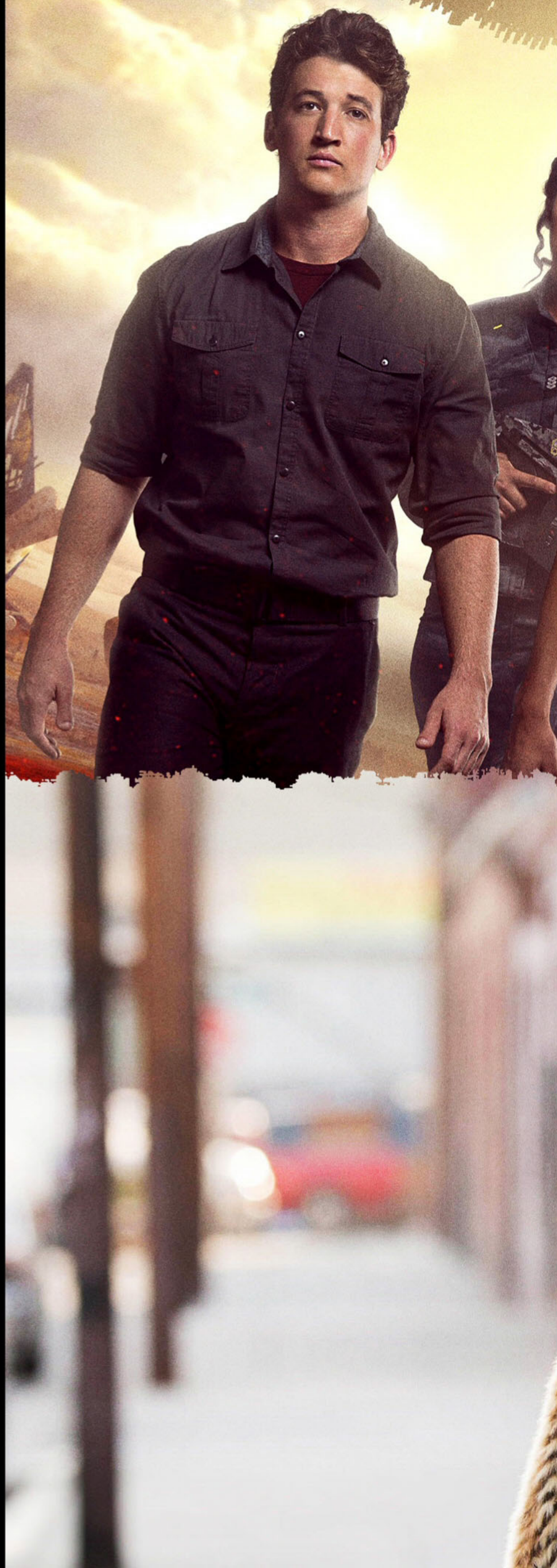
7. *"Deadpool," 20th Century Fox, $4,897,941, 2,336 locations, $2,097 average, $349,371,907, 7 weeks.*

8. *"London Has Fallen," Focus Features, $3,027,568, 2,173 locations, $1,393 average, $55,716,425, 4 weeks.*

9. *"Hello, My Name Is Doris," Roadside Attractions, $1,668,806, 488 locations, $3,420 average, $3,236,570, 3 weeks.*

10. *"Risen," Sony, $935,025, 634 locations, $1,475 average, $36,029,172, 6 weeks.*

11. *"Eye In The Sky," Bleecker Street, $932,450, 123 locations, $7,581 average, $1,654,557, 3 weeks.*



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12. *"Whiskey Tango Foxtrot," Paramount, $900,104, 847 locations, $1,063 average, $21,326,169, 4 weeks.*

13. *"Star Wars: The Force Awakens," Disney, $816,484, 552 locations, $1,479 average, $933,674,012, 15 weeks.*

14. *"The Perfect Match," Lionsgate, $682,647, 658 locations, $1,037 average, $8,724,275, 3 weeks.*

15. *"Kapoor & Sons," Fox International Productions, $598,084, 153 locations, $3,909 average, $1,933,634, 2 weeks.*

16. *"Kung Fu Panda 3," 20th Century Fox, $561,768, 480 locations, $1,170 average, $139,416,825, 9 weeks.*

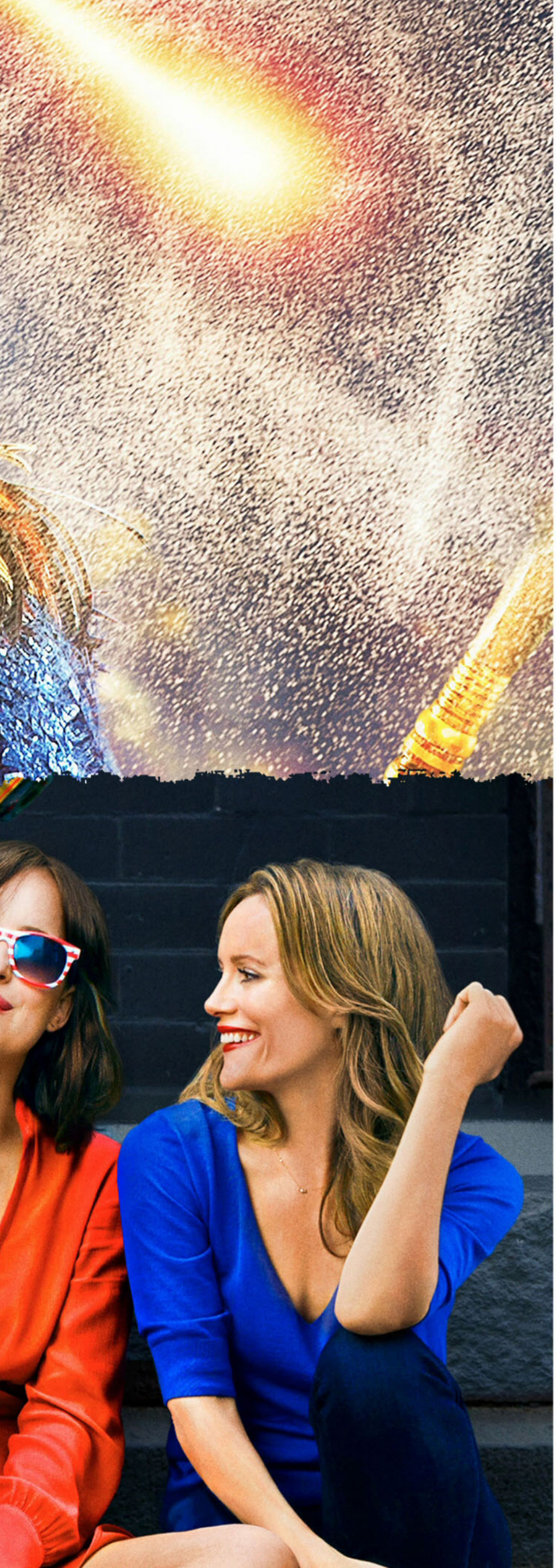


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17. *"The Revenant," 20th Century Fox, $446,912, 506 locations, $883 average, $182,068,746, 14 weeks.*

18. *"The Young Messiah," Focus Features, $274,236, 874 locations, $314 average, $6,257,221, 3 weeks.*

19. *"Gods Of Egypt," Lionsgate, $273,030, 473 locations, $577 average, $30,219,399, 5 weeks.*

20. *"How To Be Single," Warner Bros., $250,442, 188 locations, $1,332 average, $46,386,135, 7 weeks.*

Universal and Focus are owned by NBC Universal, a unit of Comcast Corp.; Sony, Columbia, Sony Screen Gems and Sony Pictures Classics are units of Sony Corp.; Paramount is owned by Viacom Inc.; Disney, Pixar and Marvel are owned by The Walt Disney Co.; Miramax is owned by Filmyard Holdings LLC; 20th Century Fox and Fox Searchlight are owned by 21st Century Fox; Warner Bros. and New Line are units of Time Warner Inc.; MGM is owned by a group of former creditors including Highland Capital, Anchorage Advisors and Carl Icahn; Lionsgate is owned by Lions Gate Entertainment Corp.; IFC is owned by AMC Networks Inc.; Rogue is owned by Relativity Media LLC



REVIEW: CHEADLE'S 'MILES AHEAD' STYLISHLY EVOKES JAZZ LEGEND



"Miles Ahead," an ambitious, experimental biopic about jazz legend Miles Davis, actually states its mission twice over the course of the movie.

Basically: "If you're going to tell a story, come with some attitude. Don't make it all corny."

The person saying it is Miles Davis, played by Don Cheadle, who also co-wrote and directed.

In the context of the film, he's speaking to a fictional music writer named Dave Braden (Ewan McGregor), who has conned, charmed and strong-armed his way into Miles' orbit for a few

days in hopes of writing a comeback story that would end the eccentric musician's half decade of dormancy.

While a little on the nose to be repeated, it's a good line, and an even better goal in the murky and generally unrewarding territory of the dreaded biopic - especially for someone as elusive, multifaceted and just downright giant as Miles Davis was.

As Cheadle's Miles cheekily says to Dave in that whispered rasp, "I was born, I moved to New York, met some cats, made some music, did some dope, made some more music, then you showed up at my house."

Knowing well how a tell-it-all approach can be duller than a Wikipedia page, Cheadle eschews the cradle to grave approach and instead focuses in on two moments - a crazy few days in Davis'"Howard Hughes of jazz" phase and much earlier during the romantic beginnings and fraught endings of his relationship with the dancer Frances Taylor (Emayatzy Corinealdi).






Miles Davis



The story jumps from the past to the present very suddenly, employing an interesting visual technique that links the two moments in time through a character, let's say, falling in the present and another continuing the motion in the past. It's a unique take on the fluidity and imprecision of memory, but, more precisely it's indicative of Cheadle's ambitions to make the film feel as unpredictable and freestyle as Miles' jazz.

Cheadle as an actor is not afraid to show Miles Davis for all his contradictions - his genius, his charm, his ego and his mania. His bold, studied and fully lived-in portrayal has attitude to spare too.

The "present" part shows a hyper-active Davis, hopped up on painkillers and hobbling with a deteriorating hip trying to collect a payment from the record company that he's long since stopped producing for. It's sort of a kitchen sink approach to the escalating events story that takes Dave and Miles everywhere from a college dorm room to score some cocaine to a high-speed shoot out. It's particularly odd then that this portion is duller than the more traditional portrait of the past.

That section plays more like a languid, melancholy ballad as we peer into his courtship of Frances and the insanity, danger and obsessiveness that drove her away. Cheadle and Corinealdi's palpable chemistry is an undeniable force here, and is a striking contrast to the occasional awkwardness of many of Cheadle and McGregor's interactions in the present. In theory, it's probably meant to be another evocation of jazz stylings, but in execution, it feels more like dead air.



Cheadle has an interesting vision here and his ambitions pay off on a number of levels - especially in his performance - but it doesn't really come together as a coherent composition. Unlike in jazz, the disparate moments, sounds and styles struggle to coalesce in service of a whole that's bigger than its parts.

"Miles Ahead," a Sony Pictures Classic release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for "strong language throughout, drug use, some sexuality/nudity and brief violence." Running time: 100 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

MPAA Definition of R:
Restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.

REVIEW: 'DARK HORSE' A LOVING PORTRAIT OF AN UNLIKELY HERO

You don't need to know anything about chess, New Zealand or Genesis Potini to fall under the spell of "The Dark Horse."

This may have as much to do with the real-life Potini as with the actor who becomes him in this loving portrait: "Fear the Walking Dead" star Cliff Curtis. His immersive portrayal makes Potini fascinating and unpredictable in every frame of "The Dark Horse."

The real guy was just as interesting. It was a 2003 documentary about the New Zealand chess champ (nicknamed the Dark Horse) that inspired writer-director James Napier Robertson to give Potini's story narrative treatment.

But it's Curtis who brings Potini to life. Compelling and authentic, lumbering and gentle, wise and innocent - the actor and his character are inseparable in this film. It's a tour de force performance that captivates from the opening scene.

We first see Gen, as he's known, wearing a colorful blanket and toothless grin in a rainstorm. He walks into an antique shop, mumbling in Maori and English as he starts playing a chess game against himself, narrating every move. He ends up in a mental hospital - a return trip, it turns out. Gen has bipolar disorder, and he doesn't always take his meds.

He seeks help from his brother, Ariki (first time actor Wayne Hapi), who reluctantly takes him in. As a leader of the Vagrants street gang, Ariki's hands - and house - are already full. He's focused on bringing his teenage son, Mana (James Rolleston), into the gang, and suggests Gen stay out of their way.

He keeps busy by volunteering with the Eastern Knights, a neighborhood chess club for kids who might otherwise be on the streets after school. With his bursts of manic energy and deep love of the game, Gen is a natural teacher. He connects the chess pieces to characters in Maori lore as he explains their motivations and movement patterns. The kids adore him and it motivates him to stay on schedule with his sleep and his medicine. He promises to take them to the national chess championships in Auckland.

Mana shows interest in his uncle's chess club, but his father forbids the distraction. Gen secretly allows his nephew to join anyway, threatening friction in the family that would upend Gen's fragile mental state.

The real Potini saw chess as a great equalizer among people and practical way to solve problems: he believed anyone could learn to play, and the skills needed to figure things out in the game also worked in everyday life. He worked earnestly to manage his bipolar disorder, in part by intentionally focusing on positive ways to contribute, like teaching chess to kids so they might imagine a life beyond their crime-ridden neighborhoods.

Curtis embodies this struggle with such sincerity and compassion that he's impossible not to root for. His Gen is the pot-bellied, toothless, eccentric hero you never knew you always wanted.

Gen is such a big-hearted character that his story is more than just a portrait of overcoming mental illness or a tale of a loving mentor taking his rag-tag team to the top. It's a reminder of our shared humanity - things like chess and movies can unite us - and, as humans, we can choose to aim for the positive, regardless of our mental, physical or geographical circumstances.

"The Dark Horse," a Broad Green Pictures release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for "language throughout and drug use." Running time: 125 minutes. Three and a half stars out of four.

MPAA definition of R: Restricted. No one under 17 admitted.

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT CRACKS iPHONE; WITHDRAWS LEGAL ACTION



The FBI said Monday it successfully used a mysterious technique without Apple Inc.'s help to hack into the iPhone used by a gunman in a mass shooting in California, effectively ending a pitched court battle between the Obama administration and one of the world's leading technology companies.

The government asked a federal judge to vacate a disputed order forcing Apple to help the FBI break into the iPhone, saying it was no longer necessary. The court filing in U.S. District Court for the Central District of California provided no details about how the FBI did it or who showed it how. Apple did not immediately comment on the development.



The brief court notice left important questions unanswered: Who showed the FBI how to break into iPhones? How did the government bypass the security features that Apple has invested millions of dollars to build into its flagship product? Are newer iPhones vulnerable to the same hacking technique? Will the FBI share its information with scores of state and local police agencies that said they also need to break into the iPhones of criminal suspects? Will the FBI reveal to Apple how it broke its security? Did the FBI find anything useful on the iPhone?

The surprise development also punctured the temporary perception that Apple's security might have been good enough to keep consumers' personal information safe even from the U.S. government - with the tremendous resources it can expend when it wants to uncover something.

The FBI used the technique to access data on an iPhone used by gunman Syed Farook, who died with his wife in a gun battle with police after they killed 14 people in San Bernardino, California, in December. They're currently reviewing the information on the phone, the Justice Department said in a statement.

U.S. magistrate Sheri Pym of California last month ordered Apple to provide the FBI with software to help it hack into Farook's work-issued iPhone. The order touched off a debate pitting digital privacy rights against national security concerns.





Apple was headed for a courtroom showdown with the government last week, until federal prosecutors abruptly asked for a postponement so they could test a potential solution that was brought to them by a party outside of the U.S. government the previous weekend. Technical experts had said there might be a few ways an outsider could gain access to the phone, although the FBI had insisted repeatedly until then that only Apple had the ability to override the iPhone's security. FBI Director James Comey said the bureau even went to the National Security Agency, which did not have the ability to get into the phone.

A law enforcement official said the FBI was successful in unlocking the iPhone over the weekend. The official spoke to reporters on a conference call on condition of anonymity because this person wasn't authorized by the Justice Department to publicly comment. The official said federal law enforcement would continue to aid its local and state partners with gaining evidence in cases - implying that the method would be shared with them.

Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance testified before a U.S. House panel earlier this month that he has 205 iPhones his investigators can't access data from in criminal investigations. And Apple is opposing requests to help extract information from 14 Apple devices in California, Illinois, Massachusetts and New York.





The case drew international attention and highlighted a growing friction between governments and the tech industry. Government commissions have been formed to study the issue of encryption's impact on law enforcement and lawmakers have also held hearings, discussing the issue, since the Feb. 16 order. Apple and other tech companies have said they feel increasing need to protect their customers' data from hackers and unfriendly intruders, while police and other government authorities have warned that encryption and other data-protection measures are making it more difficult for investigators to track criminals and dangerous extremists.

The withdrawal of the court process also takes away Apple's ability to legally request details on the method the FBI used in this case. Apple attorneys said last week that they hoped the government would share that information with them if it proved successful.

The encrypted phone was protected by a passcode that included security protocols: a time delay and self-destruct feature that erased the phone's data after 10 tries. The two features made it impossible for the government to repeatedly and continuously test passcodes in what's known as a brute-force attack. Comey said with those features removed, the FBI could break into the phone in 26 minutes.


STICE
NVESTIGATION



The official said the method used to unlock the phone appears to work on the iPhone 5C operating a version of iOS 9. In late 2014, Apple updated its operating system so the passcode is linked to the phone's overall encryption. The Cupertino-based company said that made it impossible for it to access data on the phone.

The Justice Department wouldn't comment on any future disclosures of the method to Apple or the public.

Apple CEO Tim Cook had argued that helping the FBI hack the iPhone would set a dangerous precedent - and make other iPhones vulnerable - if Apple complied with a court order to create software that would help investigators bypass the phone's security features.

It was a rare moment of public defiance by a major U.S. corporation. Other leading tech companies, including Facebook, Google and Twitter, soon voiced their support for Apple's position, as did computer security experts and civil liberties groups. But Cook's stance was denounced by top U.S. officials, including FBI Director James Comey and Attorney General Loretta Lynch, who accused Apple of trying to interfere with law enforcement.

In court filings, federal prosecutors also suggested Apple's emphasis on privacy was a marketing strategy, which Apple heatedly denied.

APPLE VS FBI
WHAT HAPPENED?



Apple's legal standoff with the FBI ended this week, but experts say the issues behind it will come up again, as more tech companies take measures to guard their customers' messages, photos, business records and other files.

After weeks of heated debate, in which Apple had resisted the FBI's demand for help, authorities say they found their own way to get the data from an encrypted iPhone used by one of the San Bernardino mass shooters.

Confused by all the back-and-forth in this high-stakes dispute? AppleMagazine explains:

WHAT WAS THE FIGHT ABOUT?

At the Justice Department's request, a federal judge ordered Apple Inc. last month to help the FBI unlock an encrypted iPhone used by Syed Farook, who along with his wife, Tashfeen Malik, killed 14 people in December. Specifically, the government wanted Apple to create software that would override an "auto-wipe" feature which is designed to kick in after anyone makes 10 wrong attempts at guessing the iPhone's passcode. Once that feature is activated, it renders all the data on the phone permanently unreadable.

Apple said it could create the software the government wanted, but it argued vehemently that doing so would be a bad idea. CEO Tim Cook said the order would set a precedent for more government demands, both in the United States and around the world. Apple also said the software could be stolen by hackers and used against other iPhones.

Federal authorities insisted they were only asking for Apple's help in a single case, although

prosecutors nationwide have said they wanted similar assistance in other cases where iPhones have been seized. While it's unclear if any useful information was stored on the iPhone, FBI Director James Comey said authorities owed it to the San Bernardino victims to leave no stone unturned in their investigation.

WHY DID THIS TURN INTO SUCH A BIG DEAL?

The case crystalized some long-simmering frustrations and conflict between the tech industry and law enforcement authorities.

Apple and other tech companies have been steadily increasing their use of encryption and other safeguards to protect their customers' data, following a wave of recent hacking attacks and revelations about government data-collection by the former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden.

Law enforcement officials, including Comey, have complained that encryption and other data safeguards are helping dangerous people hide their activities, while interfering with the government's ability to investigate crimes.

In the San Bernardino case, Apple drew support from other leading tech companies, computer security experts and civil liberties groups. They filed court briefs arguing the government was going too far in trying to force a company to create software that threatened its own customers' security. Meanwhile, top officials in the Obama administration, including U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch, denounced Apple's stance and accused the company of trying to rewrite the rules for government investigations.





WHAT DID THE JUDGE DECIDE?

The judge didn't have to rule. Cook had said he was prepared to take the case to the U.S. Supreme Court. But last week, just one day before Magistrate Sheri Pym had planned to hold a hearing on the dispute, the Justice Department asked for a delay. Authorities said an unnamed "outside party" had come forward with a technical solution to unlocking the phone, which the FBI needed time to test out.

Then on Monday of this week, the government reported that it had successfully accessed the iPhone's files and no longer needed Apple's help. For that reason, the Justice Department asked the magistrate to withdraw the order she issued in February.



SO WHO WON?

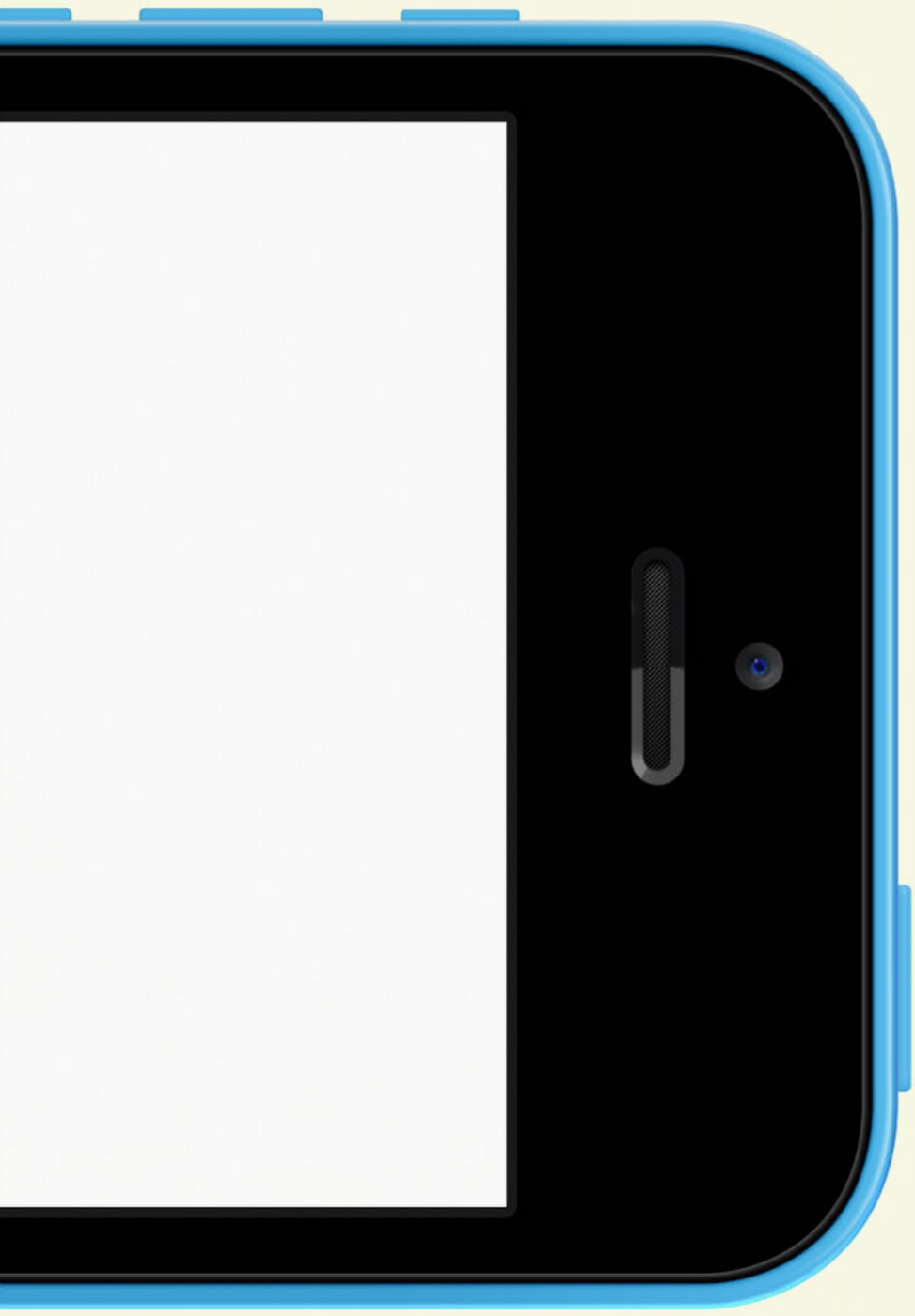
Each side can claim a victory: Authorities say they achieved their goal of getting into the iPhone, while Apple successfully resisted a court order that it contends would be harmful to its customers.

Even so, the FBI may have lost some credibility. After repeatedly insisting that only Apple had the means to help authorities unlock the phone, it turned out there was another way.

In the court of public opinion, Apple made a strong case that it was standing up for its customers, and an important principle. But some people may believe the company should have done more to help law enforcement.


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DOES THAT END THE MATTER?

It probably ends the dispute over one iPhone, but it's not the last we'll hear of this issue.

Law enforcement officials around the country still want to get into other iPhones. The FBI hasn't said how it got into the San Bernardino iPhone, but it may be able to use the same method in other cases. And we don't know who provided the solution that the FBI used. It's possible the method was devised by a private forensics expert or firm that will sell the service to other clients in the future.

Apple, of course, wants to know what method the FBI used so the company can decide if there's an iPhone vulnerability that needs to be fixed. Even if the FBI doesn't tell them, security experts predict Apple and other tech companies will keep adding more security measures to its products.

That could set the stage for more legal confrontations. Meanwhile, Congress has held hearings on the issue. Some legislators have discussed limiting how much help the government can demand of tech companies, while others want to require tech companies to provide more assistance in the future.

APPLE REMAINS IN DARK ON HOW FBI HACKED iPHONE WITHOUT HELP



The FBI's announcement that it mysteriously hacked into an iPhone is a public setback for Apple Inc., as consumers suddenly discover they can't keep their most personal information safe. Meanwhile, Apple remains in the dark about how to restore the security of its flagship product.

The government said it was able to break into an iPhone used by a gunman in a mass shooting in California, but it didn't say how. That puzzled Apple software engineers - and outside experts - about how the FBI broke the digital locks on the phone without Apple's help. It also complicated Apple's job repairing flaws that jeopardize its software.


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The Justice Department's announcement that it was dropping a legal fight to compel Apple to help it access the phone also took away any obvious legal avenues Apple might have used to learn how the FBI did it. The Justice Department declined through a spokeswoman to comment Tuesday.

A few clues have emerged. A senior law enforcement official told The Associated Press that the FBI managed to defeat an Apple security feature that threatened to delete the phone's contents if the FBI failed to enter the correct passcode combination after 10 tries. That allowed the government to repeatedly and continuously test passcodes in what's known as a brute-force attack until the right code is entered and the phone is unlocked.

It wasn't clear how the FBI dealt with a related Apple security feature that introduces increasing time delays between guesses. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because this person was not authorized to discuss the technique publicly.

has said with those features removed, the FBI could break into the phone in 26 minutes.

The FBI hacked into the iPhone used by gunman Syed Farook, who died with his wife in a gun battle with police after they killed 14 people in December in San Bernardino. The iPhone, issued to Farook by his employer, the county health department, was found in a vehicle the day after the shooting.

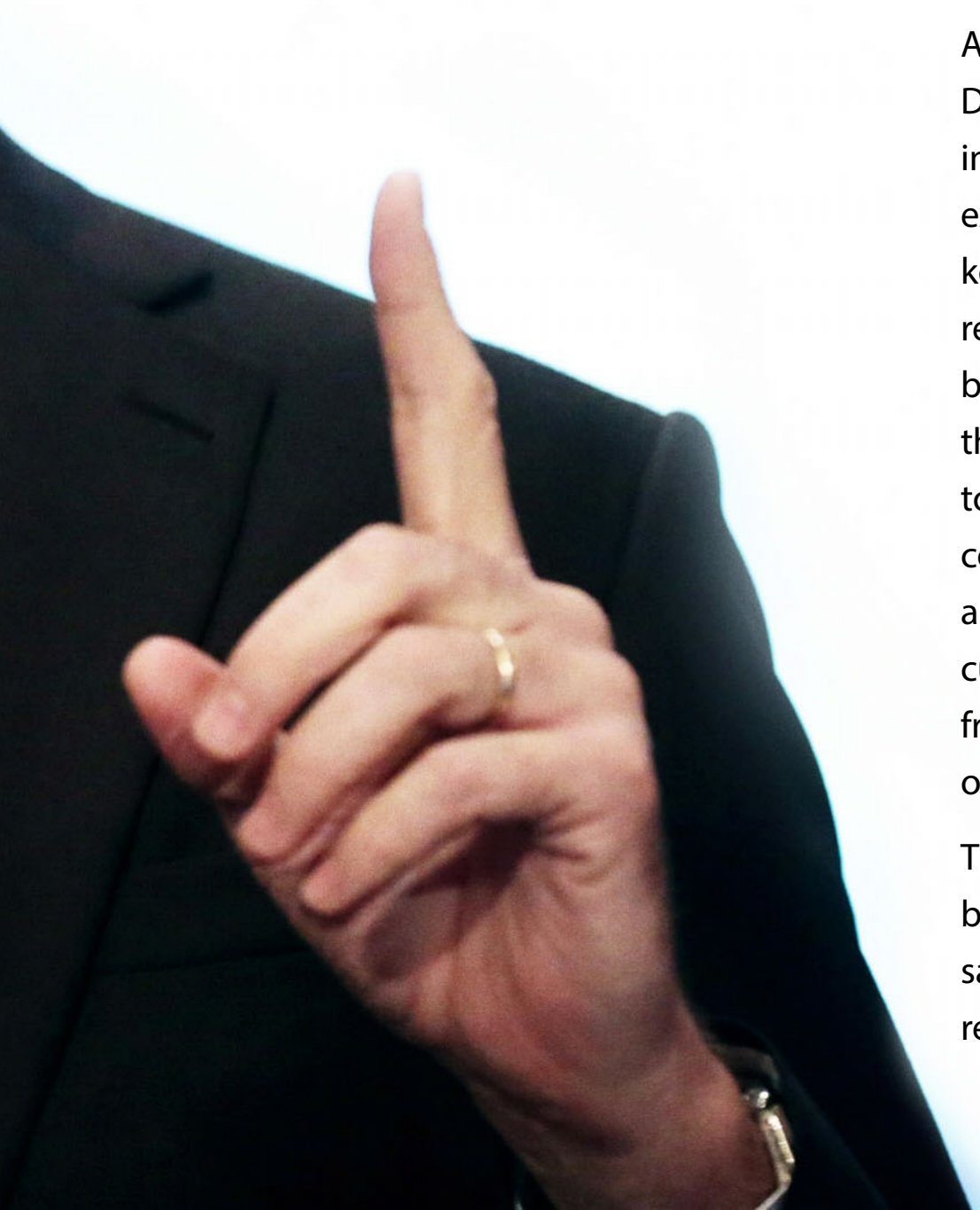
The FBI is reviewing information from the iPhone, and it is unclear whether anything useful can be found.



Apple said in a statement Monday that the legal case to force its cooperation "should never have been brought," and it promised to increase the security of its products. CEO Tim Cook has said the Cupertino-based company is constantly trying to improve security for its users.

The FBI's announcement - even without revealing precise details - that it had hacked the iPhone was at odds with the government's firm recommendations for nearly two decades that security researchers always work cooperatively and confidentially with software manufacturers before revealing that a product might be susceptible to hackers.

The aim is to ensure that American consumers stay as safe online as possible and prevent premature disclosures that might damage a U.S. company or the economy.



As far back as 2002, the Homeland Security Department ran a working group that included leading industry technology industry executives to advise the president on how to keep confidential discoveries by independent researchers that a company's software could be hacked until it was already fixed. Even now, the Commerce Department has been trying to fine-tune those rules. The next meeting of a conference on the subject is April 8 in Chicago and it's unclear how the FBI's behavior in the current case might influence the government's fragile relationship with technology companies or researchers.

The industry's rules are not legally binding, but the government's top intelligence agency said in 2014 that such vulnerabilities should be reported to companies.

"When federal agencies discover a new vulnerability in commercial and open source software - a so-called 'zero day' vulnerability because the developers of the vulnerable software have had zero days to fix it - it is in the national interest to responsibly disclose the vulnerability rather than to hold it for an investigative or intelligence purpose," the Office of the Director of National Intelligence said in a statement in April 2014.

The statement recommended generally divulging such flaws to manufacturers "unless there is a clear national security or law enforcement need."

Last week a team from Johns Hopkins University said they had found a security bug in Apple's iMessage service that would allow hackers under certain circumstances to decrypt some text messages. The team reported its findings to Apple in November and published an academic paper after Apple fixed it.

"That's the way the research community handles the situation. And that's appropriate," said Susan Landau, professor of cybersecurity policy at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. She said it was acceptable for the government to find a way to unlock the phone but said it should reveal its method to Apple.

Mobile phones are frequently used to improve cybersecurity, for example, as a place to send a backup code to access a website or authenticate a user.

The chief technologist at the Center for Democracy and Technology, Joseph Lorenzo Hall, said keeping details secret about a flaw affecting millions of iPhone users "is exactly opposite the disclosure practices of the security research community. The FBI and Apple have a common goal here: to keep people safe and secure. This is the FBI prioritizing an investigation over the interests of hundreds of millions of people worldwide."


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JIM HARRISON
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The last days of author Jim Harrison were not unlike so many days before: work, friends, cigarettes, vodka.

Best known for "Legends of the Fall," Harrison died Saturday afternoon at age 78, found at his home in Patagonia, Arizona. According to his neighbor of 18 years, author and editor Laura Chester, he had been at work in his study, where he "lit an American Spirit and was writing a poem by hand when the sudden and fatal heart attack hit him."

"A caregiver discovered him when she brought in his dinner," Chester wrote in an email Monday to The Associated Press.

Harrison wrote more than 30 books, including poems, novellas and nonfiction, and was beloved among writers and readers worldwide. Sherman Alexie, Mary Karr and Anthony Bourdain were among the friends and peers who tweeted tributes over the weekend, and his most recent book, the novella collection "The Ancient Minstrel," jumped from No. 2,364 on Amazon.com's best-seller list to No. 181 between Sunday and Monday.

According to Chester, she and Harrison and 10 other close friends had met Friday night at the Wagon Wheel, their "local cowboy saloon," where Harrison often enjoyed an iced vodka. It was a "spontaneous celebratory gathering" for Good Friday, with authors Philip Caputo and Jim Fergus among those on hand.

"We all sat in a circle with him outside in the yard where we could smoke," she wrote to the AP.

"Jim spoke to me about an upcoming trip to Paris and Seville he was planning for April," Fergus told the AP, adding that Harrison was still grieving for his longtime wife, Linda, who died last fall.

"Going to Europe, which he hadn't been able to do for a few years due to health issues, was one way for Jim to distract himself from that loneliness. And I suppose death was another way."

After Chester learned from Caputo's wife, Leslie Ware, that the author had died, she drove to his house. She said a "simple prayer" and collected his dog, Folly, so she could care for her until the arrival of Harrison's daughter, author Jamie Potenberg.

Caputo told the AP in an email that some of Harrison's friends had planned before his death to meet Sunday. They gathered at Chester's house for an Easter meal and a memorial.

"We told Jim Harrison stories, of which we all have large reservoirs to draw from," Fergus said. "We drank wine, and we laughed and laughed. Jim was so brilliant, funny, outrageous, and so specifically himself."

"After dinner, we all took turns reading poems from his various books before hugging each other goodnight," Chester explained. "Phil (Caputo) said to me, 'You know, Jim was like the focal point of our group here in Patagonia - he held us all together, and we have to promise to remain true to that spirit.' We all piled our hands one on top of the other to make that vow in Harrison's name.

"A great soul has passed. We will miss him."

OCULUS RIFT BEGINS SHIPPING REVIEWS SUGGEST WAITING IS OK

The first consumer-ready Oculus Rift virtual-reality headset was delivered to a real person over the weekend, and reviewers got their first taste. The initial feedback: It's a beautiful, wonderful device that immerses you, yet it still has a ways to go.

Oculus founder Palmer Luckey hand-delivered the first Rift to software developer Ross Martin in Anchorage, Alaska, on Saturday, kicking off a new era in virtual reality by putting the most powerful VR device yet into a consumer's hands.

Martin, who had never tried VR before, spent a few hours on the Rift Monday morning. He watched a short movie, played a game and explored a virtual environment that included an up-close encounter with a Tyrannosaurus Rex.


oculus





"I couldn't stop saying, 'Wow,'" Martin, a 33-year-old Web developer, said in an interview. But he said that he felt a touch of nausea at times and that the resolution could be better.

"If you're a gamer, this is right up your alley," he said. "You're going to be able to forgive that."

Oculus has said it's sending the Rift to its first Kickstarter backers first, followed by those who ordered one in January for $600, or at least $1,500 with a high-end personal computer included. Oculus, which began crowd-funding through Kickstarter in August 2012, was acquired by Facebook for $2 billion in 2014 and has shipped two developer versions so far.

Expectations for a consumer version have been high. There's a backlog of orders and if you order now, you can expect delivery in July. It's not clear, though, how many units Oculus made for the first round - and whether there will ultimately be much demand beyond gamers and hard-core technologists.

Early reviews by journalists have been mixed.

Steven Tweedie of Business Insider was glowingly positive in his review of the Rift, relishing the greater presence he felt in both games and narrative stories.

"Everything feels like it means more: there's a heightened connection to characters, both in games and short films, and the action carries weight," he wrote.

But he noted its hefty price tag "is undoubtedly the biggest thing keeping more people from getting the chance to try virtual reality."

Time's Lisa Eadicicco called the Rift "expensive, complicated, and totally wonderful." She added, "It's brilliant. It's fascinating. It's not perfect, but it's only getting started."

Several reviewers, including IGN's Dan Stapleton, wrote that because the Rift doesn't come with controllers that allow for separate actions by each hand, the Rift will suffer compared with the HTC Vive, which will have such controllers included when it comes out next month. Oculus expects its "Touch" controllers to come out later this year.

Wired reviewer Peter Rubin similarly bemoaned the lack of games using Touch.

Nathan Olivarez-Giles of The Wall Street Journal wasn't wowed by all the 30 games that were available at launch.

And he wrote that nausea, a consistent complaint among VR headset users, was real.

"When I pushed myself to play 'Valkyrie' for as long as 45 minutes nonstop, I took aspirin to fight off a headache."





SCIENCE



EASTER DELIVERY: CARGO SHIP ARRIVES AT SPACE STATION


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The six astronauts at the International Space Station got an early Easter treat this weekend with the arrival of a supply ship full of fresh food and experiments.

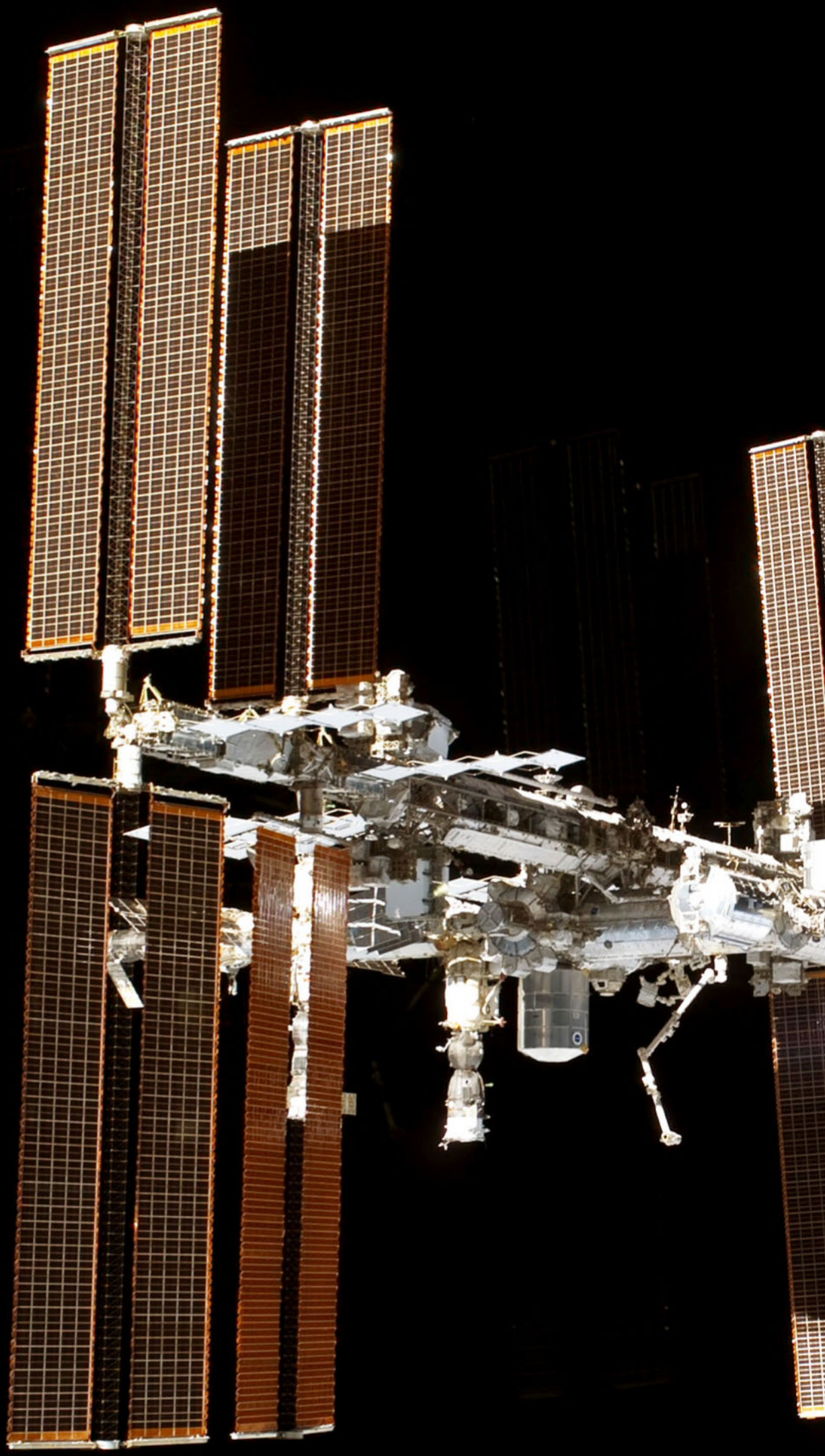
Instead of the usual bunny, Saturday's (26) delivery came via a swan - Orbital ATK's Cygnus capsule, named after the swan constellation. The cargo carrier rocketed away from Cape Canaveral on Tuesday night.

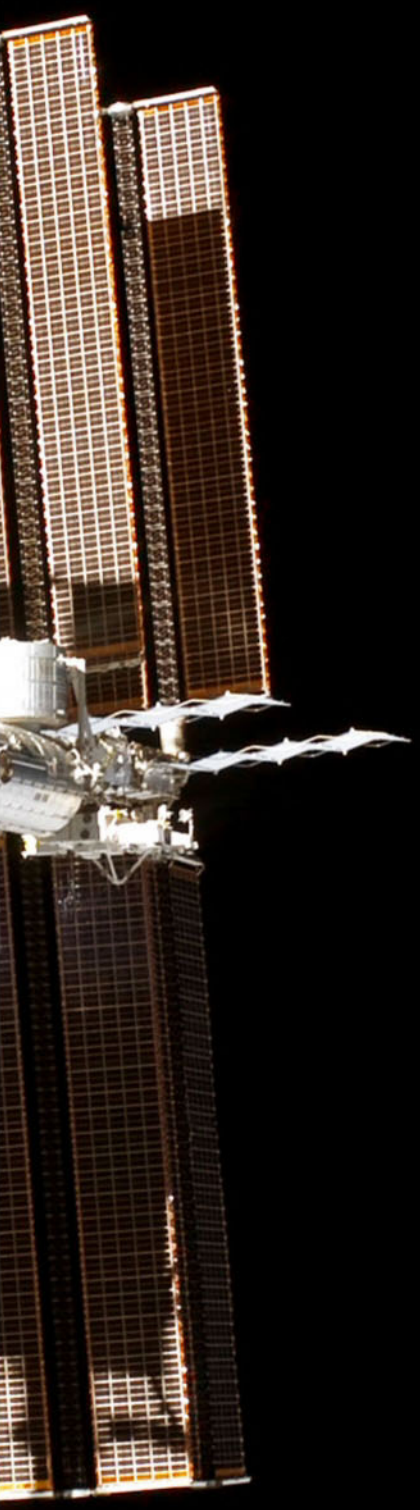
NASA astronaut Timothy Kopra used the station's big robot arm to grab the capsule, as the two craft soared 250 miles above the Indian Ocean. "Excellent work, gentlemen," Mission Control radioed. Four hours later, the capsule was bolted firmly to the complex.

It's the first of three shipments coming up in quick succession. A Russian cargo ship will lift off Thursday, followed by a SpaceX supply run on April 8. NASA has turned to private industry to keep the space station stocked.

The newly arrived Cygnus holds nearly 8,000 pounds of groceries, equipment and research. Among the newfangled science: robotic grippers modeled after geckos' feet and the ingredients for a large-scale, controlled fire. A commercial-quality 3-D printer is packed inside as well; anyone will be able to order prints, for a price, from the Made In Space company. Virginia-based Orbital ATK hints Easter eggs may also be on board.

The blaze - confined to a box inside the Cygnus - won't be set until the capsule departs in May with a load of trash. NASA researchers want to see how fast the cotton-fiberglass fabric burns, in hopes of improving future spacecraft safety. Following the experiment, the capsule will burn up, for real, during re-entry.





As it turns out, the Cygnus had an out-of-the-ordinary ride to orbit. The first-stage booster of the normally reliable unmanned Atlas V rocket stopped firing six seconds early, and the upper stage had to compensate by burning a minute longer, to get the capsule in the right orbit. Rocket maker United Launch Alliance has delayed its next launch, a military satellite mission, to figure out what went wrong.

The commander of the doomed space shuttle Columbia, meanwhile, is being honored with this latest delivery. Orbital ATK named this Cygnus after Rick Husband, who piloted the first shuttle docking at the space station in 1999. He died aboard Columbia during re-entry in 2003, along with six other astronauts. Kopra called him a "personal hero" and said he was honored to welcome the "S.S. Rick Husband" aboard.

Online:

NASA: http://www.nasa.gov/mission-pages/station/main/index.html

Orbital ATK: http://www.orbitalatk.com/

NEW NASA LAUNCH CONTROL SOFTWARE LATE, MILLIONS OVER BUDGET



Launch control software under development for NASA's deep-space exploration program is more than a year behind schedule and tens of millions of dollars above projected costs, according to an internal audit released this week.

NASA's own inspector general conducted the audit at Florida's Kennedy Space Center, where the agency hopes to launch its next-generation rocket on a test flight in 2018.

The goal is to send astronauts to Mars in the 2030s, using this supersize Space Launch System, or SLS, rocket and an Orion capsule. The 2018 SLS premiere will include an unmanned Orion; the first Orion with a crew should launch five years later.

NASA has agreed to an independent review once software is delivered for the 2018 test flight. In the meantime, officials said they have instituted improvements. Inspector General Paul Martin deems that satisfactory and considers the matter resolved.




Columbia
Challenger
Discovery
Atlantis
UNIVERSAL TIME
SHUTTLE COUNTDOWN
LOCAL TIME
WINDOW REMAINING
POST LCH DRAINBACK ELAPSED TIME
HOLD TIME REMAINING
ASST. LANDING RECOVERY DIRECTOR
LANDING RECOVERY DIRECTOR
CHIEF NASA TEST DIRECTOR
ASST. NASA TEST DIRECTOR
NASA TEST DIRECTOR
LAUNCH DIRECTOR
ASST. LAUNCH DIRECTOR



Software needed to support SLS and Orion is experiencing the same startup trouble as previous command and control software programs, the audit found. Development of this new launch control software is now projected to exceed $207 million, 77 percent above 2012 projections.

The software won't be ready until fall 2017, instead of this summer as planned, and important capabilities like automatic failure detection, are being deferred, the audit noted. The system is vital, needed to control pumps, motors, valves and other ground equipment during countdowns and launches, and to monitor data before and during liftoff.

NASA decided to write its own computer code to "glue together" existing software products a decade ago - while space shuttles still were flying and commercial shippers had yet to service the space station. Both delivery companies, SpaceX and Orbital ATK, rely on commercial software, the audit noted.

Commercial software products would be a better option for NASA as well, according to the audit, especially given recent advances in the area.

The ground systems development and operations program's "reluctance to change course reflects a cultural legacy at NASA of over-optimism and over-promising what the agency can achieve in a specific timeframe," the report stated.

A successful Orion orbital test flight, in 2014, used United Launch Alliance's unmanned Delta IV rocket.

Online:

NASA: http://www.nasa.gov/exploration/systems/sls/index.html


Health

CALORIE LABELS ON MENUS DELAYED AGAIN TO NEXT YEAR



dressing. (890 cal) 21.29

HANDHELDS

All Handhelds are served with Housemade Sweet & Spicy Pickles and include your choice of House Chips (add 420 cal), Classic (add 440 cal), BBQ-Spiced (add 440 cal) or Sweet Potato (add 340 cal) (additional 1.89) fries.

triple hog dare ya[sm]

Pulled pork, ham, bacon, cheddar, crispy onions, signature grill sauce, Ciabatta. (1010 cal) 17.29

kickin' turkey stacker

Thick-sliced turkey breast, Swiss, sriracha chile lime sauce, slaw, potato bread. (970 cal) 16.99

maple bacon chicken piadini

Cedar-seasoned chicken, cheddar, maple mustard, bacon, grilled Piadini wrap. (1040 cal) 16.99

clubhouse grille

Turkey, ham, bacon, cheddar & Jack, honey BBQ, lettuce, tomato, mayo, potato bread. (1120 cal) 16.89

american blt

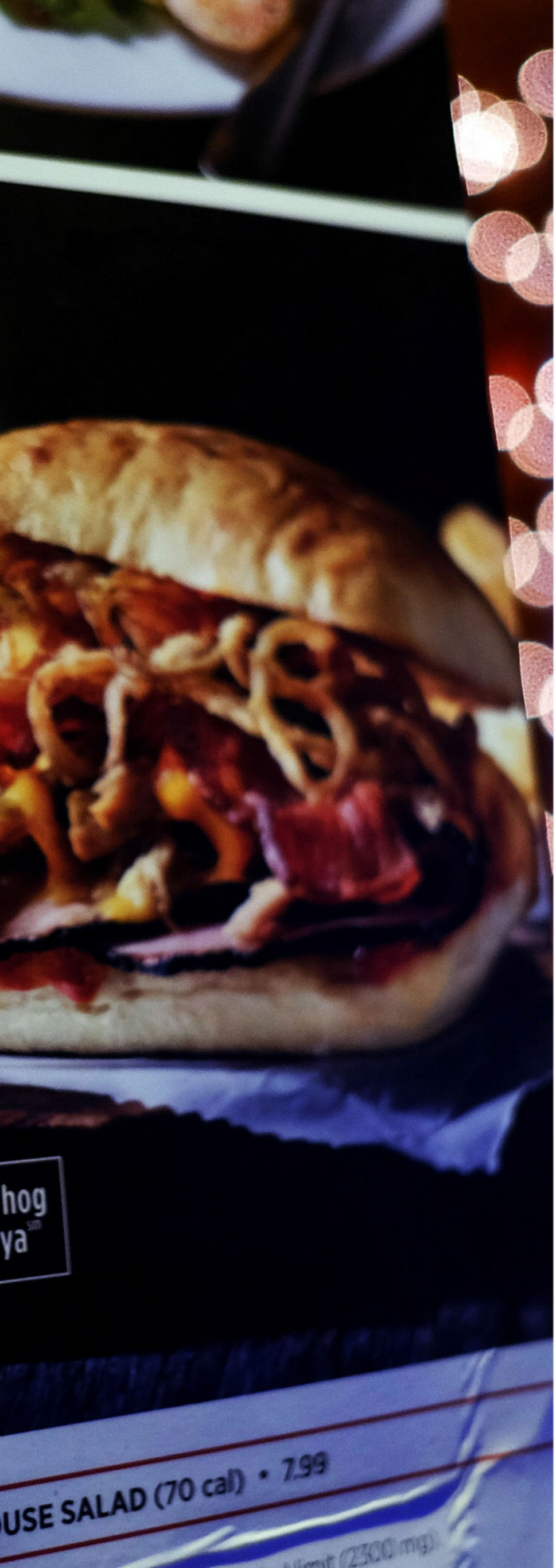
Applewood smoked bacon, American cheese, BBQ bacon ranch, potato bread. (1010 cal) 15.49

fajita rollup

with Mexi-



Image: Jewel Samad



Wondering how many calories are in that restaurant hamburger? You may not be able to find out until 2017.

The Food and Drug Administration said this month that it will delay enforcement of menu labeling rules - again - until next year. Passed as part of the health care overhaul in 2010, the rules will eventually require restaurants and other establishments that sell prepared foods and have 20 or more locations to post the calorie content of food "clearly and conspicuously" on their menus, menu boards and displays.

The years of delays have come as supermarkets, convenience stores and other retailers that never wanted to be part of the law have fiercely lobbied against them. The move will leave the final step to a new president, despite the Obama administration's staunch support of menu labeling and other food policy to help Americans eat more healthfully. And it will give opponents more time to gather support for legislation that would roll back some of the requirements.

The final rules were released in 2014, after the FDA said it had struggled to balance the concerns of retailers with the intent of the law. Restaurants and other retailers originally had until the end of 2015 to comply. Last summer, the FDA pushed that deadline back to the end of 2016. This month, they pushed the deadline back again.

Grocery stores and convenience stores have said the rules would be more burdensome for them than they would be for restaurants, which typically have more limited offerings. Pizza chains like Domino's have also opposed

the rules, saying they don't make sense for companies that take most of their orders online or over the phone.

Margo Wootan is a lobbyist at the Center for Science and the Public Interest who was part of the original coalition and successfully pushed for prepared foods at supermarkets and other retailers to be included. The argument is that those stores are selling many of the same foods for immediate consumption that restaurants do.

She says she is frustrated that consumers are still waiting for the calorie information.

"Not only is it simple and straightforward but so many states and localities have already done this," she said.

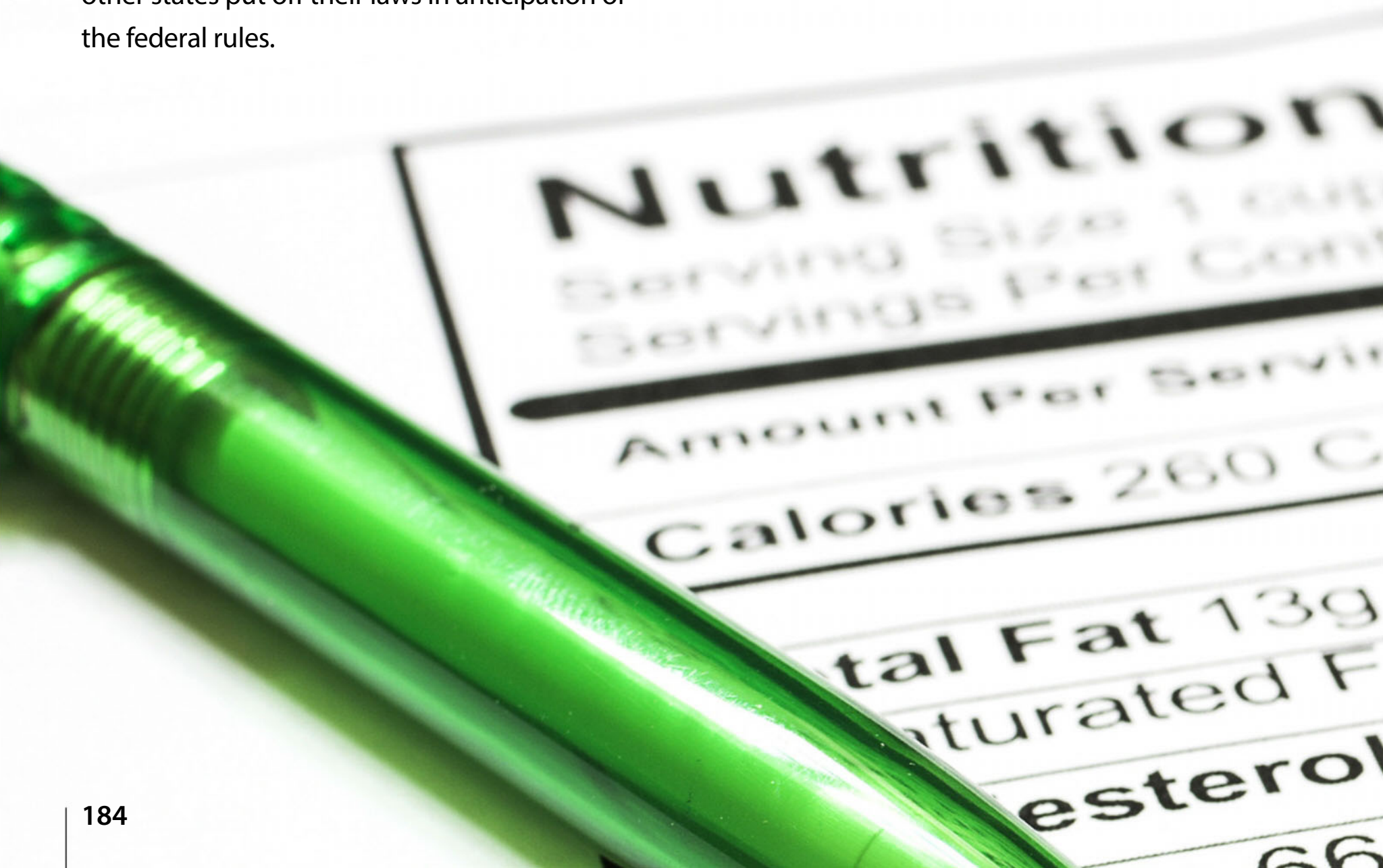
Menu labeling is already required in a handful of places, including Vermont, New York City and Montgomery County, Maryland. But several other states put off their laws in anticipation of the federal rules.

California, for example, passed a law in 2008 but put that on hold after the federal standards became law in 2010. Today, menu labeling still isn't enforced there.

"We are very frustrated," says Harold Goldstein of the California Center for Public Health Advocacy. "We call on the federal government to issue its regulations immediately and allow both state and federal law to go into effect."

The latest delay came after Congress included language in a year-end spending bill that allowed FDA to put off the December 2016 date until a year after it publishes the final guidance for retailers who have to put the rules in place. This month, the agency said it is still working on those guidelines.

"The FDA cannot speculate on the timing on when final guidance will be issued," said spokeswoman Lauren Kotwicki.



Retailers have said compliance takes time. Robert Rosado of the Food Marketing Institute, an association that represents grocery stores, said the delays only seem fair as the rules are complicated.

"The anxiety is that they're going to get it wrong," Rosado said of the retailers. "Maybe the font size isn't right for their label or they rounded the calorie count the wrong way."

The Food Marketing Institute is backing legislation that passed the House earlier this year that would make it easier for some businesses to comply with the rules. It would narrow labeling requirements for supermarkets by allowing stores to use a menu or menu board in a prepared foods area instead of putting labels on individual items. It would also allow restaurants like pizza chains that receive most of their orders remotely to post calories online instead of at the retail location. The bill also seeks to ensure that establishments aren't punished for mislabeling due to inadvertent human error.

The House bill passed in February with some Democratic support, but the Senate has yet to move on the issue. The Food Marketing Institute, pizza companies and other groups which have pushed back on the rules are working to gather more support.

Meanwhile, as Washington delays, some companies have already put the labeling in place. Consumers can find the labels by individual items on menu boards at McDonalds, Panera, Starbucks and Au Bon Pain. Others are waiting for the deadline.



'MOST INTERESTING MAN IN THE WORLD' HELPS MAKE-A-WISH

The former "Most Interesting Man in the World" who appeared in Dos Equis beer commercials for nine years is lending his gravelly voice and bearded face to a Vermont cause: Make-a-Wish Foundation Vermont.

Jonathan Goldsmith will star in public service announcements for the organization, which grants wishes to children with life-threatening medical conditions.

The Mexican beer brand recently dropped the 77-year-old, New York-born actor and says a younger "Most Interesting Man in the World" will appear in commercials later this year.

Goldsmith, who lives in Manchester, Vermont, has worked on a number of charitable causes throughout his career and has been involved with at-risk kids since he was 18, he said Monday.

"In fact, I really wanted to be a social worker. I wanted that to be my life's work, but a circuitous route took me to Broadway," he told The Associated Press.

On Monday, he and Wish Kid Jamie Heath of Barre, Vermont, recorded public service announcements for television and the Internet focused on spreading the word that Make-A-Wish helps not just children with terminal conditions but also those with life-threatening conditions where a wish can help in the healing process.

Jamie, who has an arteriovenous malformation in her brain that has caused hemorrhaging and strokes, knows firsthand how the wishes help to heal after swimming with sea turtles in Hawaii last April through Make-A-Wish Vermont.

"It was awesome. I will never forget the joy that that brought me," said the 15-year-old.

"It let me run away for a week. And when I got back, I felt I no longer had to run away. You know I was ready to accept my condition and my disabilities," said Jamie, who also speaks at Make-A-Wish fundraising events.

SOUNDCLOUD EXPANDS INTO MAINSTREAM WITH PAID STREAMING PLAN

SoundCloud is entering paid music streaming, hoping to turn its huge community of cover singers, dubstep remixers and wannabe stars into a bigger source of revenue.

Since its launch in 2007, the Berlin-based online music service has allowed pretty much any audio to be uploaded to its cloud - from Kanye West outtakes to teenagers singing over canned music. It has slowly introduced tools to earn revenue, introducing paid services for artists in 2008 and ad revenue sharing for invited musicians in 2014.




UNDCLOUD


SOUNDCLOUD

But after signing deals with major labels, including holdout Sony Music this month, SoundCloud is adding a subscription plan for consumers, giving them ad-free listening and a whole range of music from mainstream artists that had shunned the service because it only gave tracks away for free, including top acts like Taylor Swift.

SoundCloud, privately held and with tech investors like Union Square Ventures and Kleiner Perkins, will have a staggering 125 million tracks available when the paid tier, SoundCloud Go, launches Tuesday. That's about four times other paid services.

The fast-growing field of paid music subscription services is already crowded, led by companies like Spotify, with 30 million paying subscribers, and Apple, which jumped to 10 million after launching last year.

SoundCloud hopes to distinguish itself with its massive variety and huge audience of 175 million monthly listeners.

"We're at the very early days of streaming," said Eric Wahlforss, the co-founder and chief technology officer, in an interview. "The pie is going to be very large over time."



SoundCloud Go will cost $10 a month and offer ad-free offline playback on mobile devices. It'll also allow artists to choose whether to give away tracks for free or reserve them for paying customers - an option not allowed by Spotify, which depends on having quality free music to draw in prospective paying customers.

Wahlforss said a key selling point for consumers is the many tracks on SoundCloud you won't find elsewhere.

"You're going to be able to listen to a Rihanna next to an emerging artist, next to a DJ set, next to a mashup in the same playlist," said Wahlforss. "It's new for us, it's new for the world."

For example, on SoundCloud you can find gems like a John Legend's cover of the Adele hit, "Rolling in the Deep." Or a 4-minute version of "30 Hours," a shortened take of one of the songs from Kanye West's latest album, "The Life of Pablo." The album version is exclusively streaming on competing music service Tidal.

SoundCloud's reputation for hosting music that is off the beaten path is what drew DJ Kaskade to the platform. Without saying whether he'll put music behind the pay wall, Kaskade's manager Stephanie LaFera said it has long been a place for the DJ to connect with fans looking to dig deeper than a standard release.

"We feel like we're speaking to an audience that's already with us, fans that are open to experimentation, sub-genres and all the quirks that come with the world of electronic music," she said.



AN ONLINE TECH SHOPPING SERVICE CALLED ENJOY SET TO EXPAND

Enjoy, an online concierge service for gadgets, is expanding beyond San Francisco and New York City nearly a year after it was launched.

The startup, founded by former J.C. Penney CEO and Apple executive Ron Johnson, will be adding certain neighborhoods of Los Angeles this week and then Chicago in May. The service allows customers to order high-end gadgets ranging from cameras and fitness trackers to drones on the Enjoy website and have them delivered for free by an expert who will show clients how to use the device. Visits last about an hour.

“We’re trying to reinvent the way people buy technology products. We’ve learned a lot, and we’ve seen positive momentum,” said Johnson, who oversaw the expansion of Apple stores for 12 years before he took the top job at Penney. He was on the job for 17 months when he was fired from the department store chain in April 2013 after spearheading a disastrous turnaround plan.

Enjoy now has 150 employees and has expanded to 150 products from 29 when it first launched in May 2015. Enjoy's list of partners also has grown to 25 from nine. The lineup includes Microsoft, Hewlett-Packard, AT&T, Jawbone and Garmin. The company just added Apple products like Apple TV and Apple's iPad Pro as well as new Wi-Fi solutions like AirPort Express. Johnson said the products selected are premium and are not heavily discounted in the marketplace.

Customers order online and then can designate when they want the product delivered. The timeframe for delivery is as soon as four hours from the time of purchase. Johnson has said the products are not sold at a higher price than rivals because its costs of operations are low. Instead of opening stores, Enjoy is investing in its people who receive benefits and are not contractors. And employees can set their own flexible work schedules.


HDMI

Returns amount to just 1 percent at Enjoy, below the 10 percent industry average, Johnson said. He declined to say how many customers have signed on, but he said a majority are now repeat shoppers. The company has raised about $80 million, but Johnson declined to say how much he's spent so far.

But Johnson acknowledges he's learned some lessons too, particularly that customers want same-day deliveries.

"When they want something, they want it today," he said, noting that logistics is a hard nut to crack. Johnson said Enjoy's engineers are constantly testing the model. But he said that 97 percent of the time, Enjoy deliveries are on time or early. Enjoy purchases inventory and stores it in warehouses located where it offers its services.

Johnson also said Enjoy customers are younger than he expected. A majority are in their 20s and 30s and are looking for someone to help them set up their gadget.

Johnson said Enjoy has to adapt to different markets. For example, in New York, experts use the subways, while the San Francisco's Bay area, they travel by car.

Johnson said he's learned from his past job experiences, particularly at Penney, where he quickly got rid of most discounts and changed to an everyday low price strategy, without testing it on customers. The tactic led to shoppers fleeing.

"Most people felt we had a great vision. We moved too fast," he said, referring to his time at Penney. So, he added, "You really don't want to be in a hurry. Great things take time."





JAPAN: TROUBLE REACHING INNOVATIVE NEW SPACE SATELLITE

Japan's space agency says communication has failed with a newly launched, innovative satellite with X-ray telescopes meant to study black holes and other space mysteries.

The agency said in a statement Sunday that since the problem began Saturday afternoon, it hasn't known the condition of the satellite, called "Hitomi." It's trying to reconnect with the satellite, which was launched on Feb. 17.

The Japan Times newspaper says a Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency official, Saku Tsuneta, said that he didn't know yet if communications could be re-established. The paper said astronomy observations can't start this summer as expected if the problem continues.

The Japanese space agency did not return a request for comment.

Jonathan McDowell, an astronomer at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, said he suspected that the satellite had suffered an "energetic event," possibly a gas leak or a battery explosion, that sent the satellite tumbling end-over-end. That would mean its antenna isn't pointing where it needs to, which is why the satellite can't communicate with the space agency, he said.

The danger is that in that state, the satellite may not be able to draw the solar energy it needs to its panels and its battery will run down before the space agency can reconnect with the satellite and try to fix it, he said.

"Everyone's just gutted," said McDowell, who works with another high-tech space X-ray telescope, Chandra. "To hear that they've run into this piece of bad luck, it's so very sad. I know enough about how the sausage was made to know that this could have easily have happened to us. Space is very unforgiving."



PANDORA CO-FOUNDER TIM WESTERGREN RETURNS AS CEO



Pandora, which is facing increasing competition from Apple Music, Spotify and other music streaming services, said CEO Brian McAndrews has left the company and has been replaced with co-founder Tim Westergren.

Shares of Pandora fell sharply after the news was announced Monday morning.

The company did not say why McAndrews left. He has been Pandora CEO for less than three years.

A Pandora spokeswoman did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Westergren co-founded the Internet radio company 16 years ago and led Pandora as CEO from 2002 to 2004.



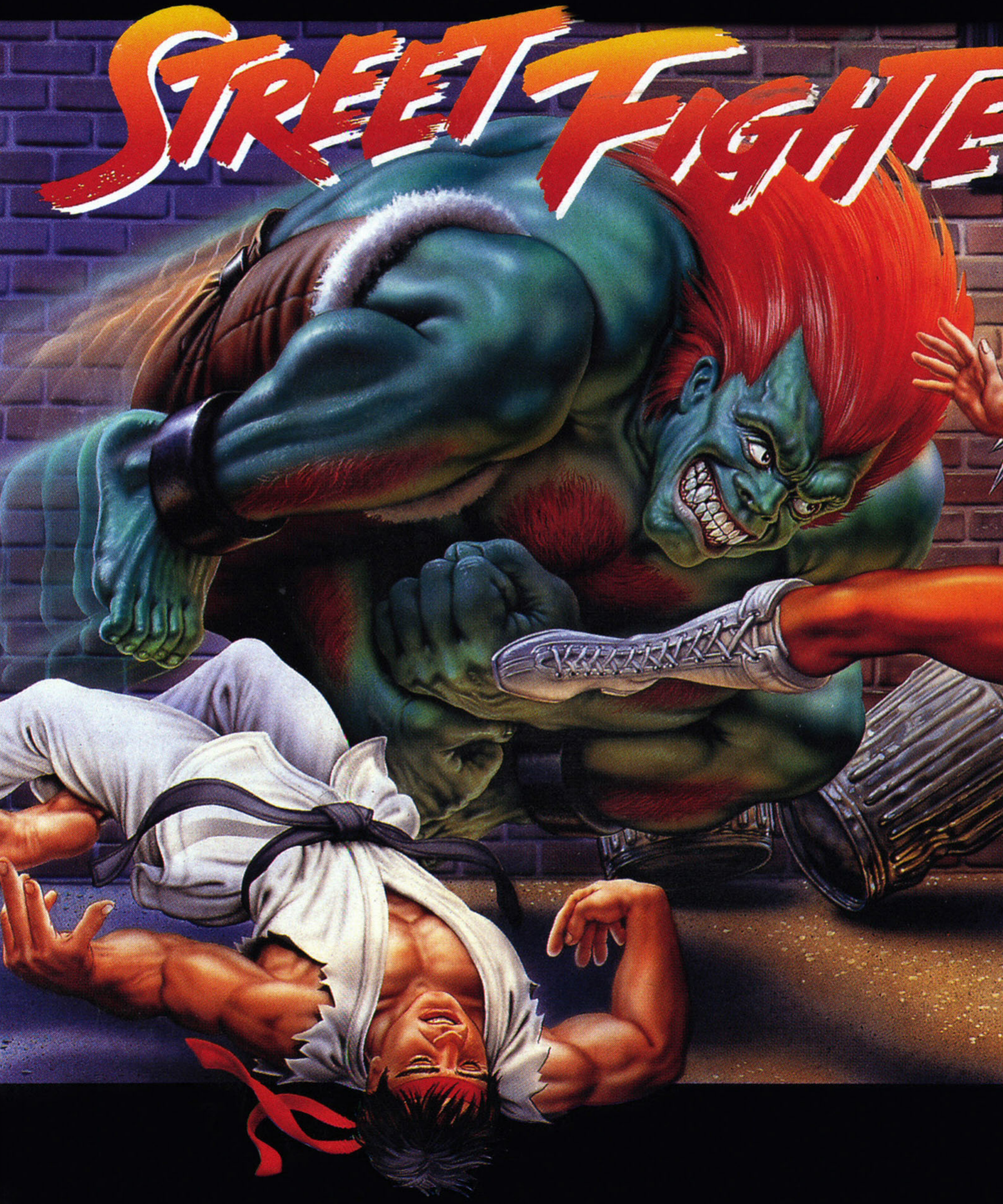
In February, Pandora reported disappointing earnings results for its fourth quarter as more companies compete for online music listeners. The Oakland, California-based company said listener hours in the quarter rose 3 percent to 5.37 billion hours compared to the same period a year before, but the number of active listeners fell less than a percent to 81.1 million. Pandora users can listen for free, and the company makes most of its money from advertisements.

Spotify, which was launched in 2006, said it had 20 million paying subscribers last year and more than 75 million active users. Apple Inc.'s service said in October that it had 6.5 million paying subscribers within four months of launching.

Pandora has said it is working on a service that's more similar to Spotify and Apple Music, allowing users have more control over which songs they want to hear.

Shares of Pandora Media Inc. fell 99 cents, or 9.1 percent, to $9.94 in morning trading Monday.


PANDORA


STREET FIGHTE



VIDEO GAME HALL OF FAME REVEALS FINALISTS FOR MAY INDUCTION

"Sonic the Hedgehog," "Space Invaders" and "John Madden Football" are among 15 games named Tuesday as finalists for the World Video Game Hall of Fame.

The winners will be inducted May 5 at The Strong museum in Rochester, where the hall opened last year.

The contenders also include: "Elite," "Final Fantasy," "Grand Theft Auto III," "The Legend of Zelda," "Minecraft," "Nurburgring," "The Oregon Trail," "Pokemon Red and Green," "Sid Meier's Civilization," "The Sims," "Street Fighter II" and "Tomb Raider."

The finalists "span decades, gaming platforms and countries of origin, but what they all have in common is their undeniable impact on the world of gaming and popular culture," said Jon-Paul Dyson, director of The Strong's International Center for the History of Electronic Games.

The list was culled from thousands of nominations from more than 100 countries, hall officials said. An international advisory committee of journalists, scholars and others will guide the final selection.

"Whether it's an iconic game like 'The Legend of Zelda,' a pioneering educational title like 'The Oregon Trail,' or an innovator like 'Elite,' which forever changed the design and development of other games," Dyson said, "they're among the most influential games of all time."






POLICE
grand
theft
auto III





Nominations for the hall can come from anyone and be from any platform - arcade, console, computer, handheld or mobile - but must be widely recognized and have influenced the design and development of other games or other forms of entertainment. They also must have been popular over time and in different countries.

The inaugural inductees last year included "Pong," the game that introduced millions to electronic play, and "Doom," which triggered a debate over the role of games and violence in society. Also inducted were "Super Mario Bros.," "Pac-Man," "Tetris" and "World of Warcraft."



COLLEGE BASKETBALL HELPS CBS, TBS IN TELEVISION RATINGS

College basketball's March Madness is lifting CBS and its cable partner TBS in the television ratings.

CBS' telecast of the Villanova-Kansas matchup to decide a place in the Final Four brought 11.6 million people to CBS on Saturday, typically a quiet night for broadcast television. TBS brought in 10.1 million people on Sunday for the men's game between North Carolina and Notre Dame.

TBS broke the stranglehold that the news networks have had in the ratings lately as the top cable network for the week. Since TBS will also show the Final Four semifinals and men's championship game within the next week, it should continue benefiting from an influx in viewers.

Television's most popular show last week was a familiar one - CBS'"NCIS" drama, with its New Orleans spinoff finishing second.

CBS averaged 8.4 million viewers in prime time last week. ABC (5.57 million) and NBC (5.56 million) finished in a virtual tie for second. Fox had 3.1 million viewers, Univision had 1.8 million, the CW had 1.26 million, ION Television had 1.25 million and Telemundo had 1.1 million.

TBS averaged 3.89 million viewers in prime time. Fox News channel had 2.1 million viewers, HGTV had 1.75 million, USA had 1.7 million and AMC had 1.59 million.

NBC's "Nightly News" topped the evening newscasts with an average of 8.5 million viewers. ABC's "World News" was second with 8.2 million and the "CBS Evening News" had 7.1 million viewers.

For the week of March 21-27, the top 10 shows, their networks and viewerships: "NCIS," CBS, 15.9 million; "NCIS: New Orleans," CBS, 13.38 million; "Dancing With the Stars," ABC, 12.46 million; "The Walking Dead," AMC, 12.38 million; NCAA Basketball: Villanova vs. Kansas, CBS, 11.56 million; "The Voice" (Monday), NBC, 11.22 million; "Criminal Minds," CBS, 10.95 million; "The Voice (Tuesday), NBC, 10.76 million; "Little Big Shots," NBC, 10.57 million; NCAA Basketball: North Carolina vs. Notre Dame, TBS, 10.11 million.

ABC is owned by The Walt Disney Co. CBS is owned by CBS Corp. CW is a joint venture of Warner Bros. Entertainment and CBS Corp. Fox is owned by 21st Century Fox. NBC and Telemundo are owned by Comcast Corp. ION Television is owned by ION Media Networks.

Online:

http://www.nielsen.com



DC-AREA HOSPITAL CHAIN GETTING BACK ONLINE AFTER CYBERATTACK



A large chain of Washington-area hospitals says it's made "significant progress" toward restoring its computer systems after a cyberattack and it has "no evidence" that patient information was stolen or compromised.

The FBI is investigating the malware attack on Medstar Health Inc. that forced the hospital chain to use paper systems and prevented patients from booking appointments.

MedStar said in a statement that it hoped to restore the majority of its computer systems Tuesday. The company said its network of 10 hospitals and thousands of affiliated physicians remains open, "with a few unique exceptions."

The company hasn't said whether Monday's malware attack on its computer system included a ransom demand. Last month, a California hospital paid hackers $17,000 in the Bitcoin currency to regain control of its computer system.





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CONTACTS

Executive Director - ceo@techlifenews.com
Relationship Management - crm@techlifenews.com
Editor - editor@techlifenews.com
Advertise - ads@techlifenews.com
Social Network - network@techlifenews.com
Promotions - promo@techlifenews.com

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ivan Castilho
Chief Executive Officer / Design Conception

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Glauco Ribeiro
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Web Designer / Programmer

WRIWRITERS

Precise English Inc.
Benjamin Kerry ***(UK)***
Gavin Lenaghan ***(UK)***
Craig Lenaghan ***(UK)***
Elena Lusk ***(US)***

COLUMNS

iTUNES REVIEW
Benjamin Kerry

FINANCE NEWS
Associated Press / Bloomberg

REVISION

Gavin Lenaghan
Elena Lusk

PRODUCTION SUPPORT / COLLABORATORS

Rui da Costa
Segolene Vincent
Lise Berda
James Jarvis
Richard Sawyer
Lauren Brown
Matthew Coburn
Jeffrey Milks
Gustavo Leite
Susan Kiesling
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